

POEMS

AND

PLAYS.

BY

MRS. WEST,

AUTHOR OF "A TALE OF THE TIMES," "A GOSSIP'S STORY," &c. &c.

Know thine own worth, and reverence the lyre ;

Wilt thou debase the heart which God refin'd ?

No : let the heaven-taught soul to heaven aspire,

To fancy, freedom, harmony resign'd.

BEATTIE.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY R. TAYLOR AND CO.

FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1805.



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CONTENTS.

VOL. III.

	Page
T HE MINSTREL, a Tragedy - - - -	1
Elegy on the Death of the Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke, first published in 1797 - - - -	123
Zephyrus and May - - - -	138
The Sports of Echo - - - -	149
Early Attachment. Written after the Death of Laura, 1802 - - - -	158
To Thyrsis, with the Author's Poems, August 7th, 1799 - - - -	166
Written after the Death of Thyrsis, in the Autumn of 1801 - - - -	169
The Spartan Matron - - - -	172
The British Mother - - - -	176
The Wars of Apostasy - - - -	180
SIXTEEN SONNETS.	
Sonnet 1. - - - -	189
2. Written in Spring, 1800 - - - -	190
3. On walking in the Pleasure-grounds of a de- ceased Friend - - - -	191

4. On hearing distant Village Psalmody	- -	192
5. On Miss Seward's complaining of Indisposition		193
6. To Mrs. B——	- - - -	194
7. To Time	- - - -	196
8. On Confidence	- - - -	196
9. Written May 16th, 1802, after a severe frosty Night	- - - -	197
10. To Miss C——	- - - -	198
11. To Miss S. S——	- - - -	199
12. To C. S. Esq.	- - - -	200
13.	- - - -	201
14. Written in the Spring of 1803	- -	202
15. To Lycid	- - - -	203
16. To a young Lady on her Marriage, De- cember 31, 1804	- - - -	204
To the Hon. Mrs. C——	- - - -	205
Rural Disappointments	- - - -	211
Fingal in Lochlin, a Tale	- - - -	214
Lycid, an Elegiac Poem, written in the Spring of 1804	- - - -	239

THE
MINSTREL:
OR
THE HEIR OF ARUNDEL.
A Tragedy.

Lay not that flattering unction to your soul
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks.

SHAKESPEARE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

RODOLPH, Earl of Arundel.

THE MINSTREL.

FATHER ANSELM.

RODERIC, } Retainers to Rodolph.
SIGEBERT, }

GEOFFREY, Rodolph's Seneschal.

RANULPH, } Friends to the Minstrel.
HENRIC, }

WOMEN.

ALICIA, Daughter to Rodolph.

MATILDA DE COURCY.

Attendants, Priests, Soldiers, &c.

Scene.—Arundel Castle and its environs.

Time.—About twenty-four hours.

The action is supposed to have taken place in the latter end of the reign of King Stephen.

THE MINSTREL.

ACT I.

SCENE

*An antient hall hung round with trophies and armorial
ensigns; an oriel at the upper end, in which ALICIA
is discovered at work with her maidens.*

ATTENDANT.

OUR hour of toil is past, and we have finish'd
Our 'custom'd labours: may we sport?

ALICIA.

Away!

And choose your pastime.

ATTENDANT.

Will you join us, lady?

ALICIA.

Care hath untun'd my mind for pleasant glees,
And fitted it for melancholy themes,....
The woes of lovers, and the wrongs of fortune:

Such ditties as the captive Minstrel chants
To heavenly melody.

ATTENDANT.

Alas! dear lady,
The cruel Geoffrey, since the Earl's departure,
With tenfold malice aggravates the woes
Of that ill-fated, gallant youth: he talks
Of racks and chains and goading whips. The Minstrel
With idiotic wildness rolls his eyes,
Takes larger strides, wreathes rushes round his bonnet,
And apes the style of mighty potentates.
If in the wreck of his disordered mind
One ray of reason yet remain'd, despair
Must quench the heavenly beam.

GEOFFREY, *without*.

You must not pass.

This is my lady's bower.

MINSTREL, *without*.

Carle, I have sung

To ladies fair as thine.

ALICIA, *speaking at the side scene*.

Give him free entrance.

Calamity is sacred.

GEOFFREY, *without.*

For this insult
You shall repent, if there are bonds and scourges.
[*The Minstrel enters in a disordered manner, and
throws himself upon the ground. Geoffrey fol-
lows, and a boy with the Minstrel's harp*]

ALICIA, *to Geoffrey.*

Have pity, Seneschal, upon a stranger
Whom the rude winds and merciless ocean threw
Shipwreck'd, forlorn, and wretched on our coast,
His wealth ingulph'd, his friends all lost; no guide
Save that poor village harper. Mark, my maidens,
Each gesture speaks the grace of noble birth;
Even in his wildest moods he shows a genius
Above the common stamp.

GEOFFREY.

So thinks my lord;
And therefore purposes to keep him captive
In safest custody, with hope to gain
An ample ransom.

ALICIA.

This unworthy plan,
Injurious to the honour of my father,
Is thine, and only thine.—Did Heaven bestow
Yon spacious lands, or bid this noble structure

Rise from the rocky beach, that houseless wretches
 Whom the vext elements had spar'd might find
 A sure destruction from the stern possessor
 Of Arundel's extensive barony?
 Earl Edmund hospitably used to *seek*
 The children of affliction; in this hall
 He fed the fatherless.—Alas! what scenes
 Of barb'rous exultation and fierce riot
 Have since succeeded!

GEOFFREY.

Can Alicia purpose
 To cast reproach upon her martial father?
 Is there a field, wherein the rival hosts
 Of Stephen and Matilda have contended,
 In which earl Rodolph's banner did not mark
 The heat and danger of the bloody contest?
 Lord Edmund liv'd in Henry's peaceful reign
 Luxurious and inglorious——

ALICIA.

And expir'd
 Regretted and revered. All-gracious Heav'n,
 Guard my great father in the dangerous course
 His ardent spirit loves; and guard him too
 From low projectors of dishonest plans;
 From sycophants and artful counsellors!

To the Minstrel.

Hast thou a wish, my friend, that I can grant?

MINSTREL, *rising with apparent calmness.*

Give me my harp. The foul fiend now hath left me,
And I must chant a hymn. The setting sun
Will tell it her I love.

The Minstrel sings.

The Minstrel in his dungeon sighs,
The proud chief scorns his woe ;
He sees the distant battle rise,
The heaven-commission'd arrow flies,
And the proud chief lies low.

Haste to thy bower, thou pretty maid,
And tell thy beads, and pray ;
And call thy guardian saint to aid :
The slaughter will not soon be staid ;
For *Vengeance* fights today.

Go, shut thy door, thou lady dear,
And take thy wonted rest :
Though *Vengeance* combat, do not fear ;
Thy guardian saint will soon appear
To shield thy guiltless breast.

ALICIA.

Thanks, gallant youth : could wealth repay thy skill,
 The largess should be ample ; but I mean not
 To bend thy generous independent soul
 To the hard usage of captivity.
 Accept this bracelet ; in thy happier days
 Thou need'st not blush to bind it on thy arm ;
 And when thy lovely mistress shall inquire
 From whence the honourable gift, inform her,
 Earl Rodolph's daughter gave it for thy skill
 In minstrelsy.

MINSTREL.

Can Rodolph be an earl?

ALICIA.

I see thou art a stranger. He possesses
 The earldom and demesnes of Arundel.—
 Why tremble at his name?

MINSTREL.

It is ill-omen'd ;
 The screech-owl and the raven mutter it ;
 And the night sorceress, as she rides the storm,
 Howls it in thunder. Even the busy fiend
 Who haunts me, ever and anon cries " Rodolph !

"False, treacherous, murderous Rodolph! hateful

"Rodolph!

"Yet Rodolph too is mortal."

ALICIA.

Wretched man!

To Geoffrey.

Is he thus ever wild, or but at times
Sorely distemper'd?

GEOFFREY.

Lady, I suspect

That malice sways him rather than the moon.

This is a subtle knave, who practises

Upon the generous temper of my lord

By feigning a fantastic malady.

Had I the power to put him to the question,

The rack would settle his disorder'd brain.

ALICIA.

If 'tis thy master's will to keep this captive

Till he reveal his lineage, 'tis my pleasure

That he should meet with honourable treatment;

Such as an earl should grant; such as the wretched

Claim from the children of prosperity.

What other service can I render thee? [*to the Minstrel.*

MINSTREL, *pointing to the Harper.*

Yon stripling is unwell ; my state apartments
Suit not his maladies ; he would be *free*.

ALICIA.

And leave thee among strangers ?

MINSTREL.

I am strange.

ALICIA.

Hast thou a mother ?

MINSTREL.

No.

ALICIA.

A father ?

MINSTREL.

I *had* a father.

ALICIA.

How came he by his death ?

MINSTREL.

He bled, and died,

The year that I was drown'd.

ALICIA.

You drown'd?

MINSTREL.

Yes, drown'd,

And buried—I had masses chanted o'er me;
The rabble said, "He's gone!"

ALICIA.

Oh, pitying saints,
Restore this ruin'd greatness!

To Geoffrey, pointing to the Harper.

Let that youth

Have freedom.

GEOFFREY.

Surely, madam, 'twere unwise——

Yet if your pleasure——

MINSTREL.

He's but a poor chick,
That will not pay the plucking.

To Alicia.

When I pray,
Which sometimes happens in my brighter moods,
Lady, I'll think of thee; and I will beg

That when an earthquake shakes these towers thou
 mayst
 Be hid in some poor hamlet. *[Exit Minstrel.]*

ALICIA, *to Geoffrey.*

At thy peril,
 Observe my orders. *[Exeunt Geoffrey and Harper.]*

ATTENDANT.

Father Anselm waits
 Your pleasure.

ALICIA.

Leave us. Vespers now draw nigh ;
 And I have many errors to confess,
 And many a grief to tell. *[Attendants retire.]*

Enter ANSELM.

ALICIA.

Heav'n speed you, father !
 My sorrows crave your pity and wise guidance.
 Are there no tidings from the Earl?

ANSELM.

None, lady.

ALICIA.

I doubt not, father, but your pious prayers
Have bless'd the soldier's arduous enterprise.

ANSELM.

The man of peace abhors all deeds of blood,
Save when a subject, in the public quarrel,
Obeys the voice of lawful power, and arms
Against the common foe: Religion then
With sacred rituals consecrates his banners,
And on the hero's early tomb bestows
Her blessed requiems. Not such the strife
Which goads our country's bleeding breast; not such
The feuds between earl Rodolph and De Courcy.
Malignant passions mark these fatal conflicts,
When mighty barons wage a private war,
In stern despite of law.

ALICIA.

Yet you have said,
De Courcy's claim to Arundel's fair earldom
Was more remote than Rodolph's.

ANSELM.

Have I said
That Rodolph's claim was just?

ALICIA.

Oh! holy Anselm,
 Your dark ambiguous hints, your sudden pauses,
 Your looks of deep distress when I have nam'd
 My father's rights, have waken'd in my soul
 An undefin'd dismay. Intrust the secret—
 If there be any secret; my firm soul
 Shall ne'er betray the tale.

ANSELM.

No:—rather rest
 In happy ignorance.

ALICIA.

I know too much
 For happy ignorance. Rodolph has seized
 The sword of slaughter, never to resign it
 While life remains, or while De Courcy lives.
 The vassals, castle, daughter of his rival
 Are marked for ruin. Should these proud hopes fail,
 I must become a houseless wanderer;—
 A poor dependent, or a cloister'd nun.
 Fit me, good Anselm, for my fortunes; tell me
 The story of my house: subdue my soul
 To meet the righteous punishment of guilt,

Or arm me with the pride of conscious virtue.
You knew the former earl of Arundel?

ANSELM.

I did.

ALICIA.

And he was murder'd in yon wood by ruffians?

ANSELM.

They must be graceless ruffians, who could murder
The generous Edmund.

ALICIA.

Were they not fierce outlaws?
You do not answer....Did my father know them?
You look mysterious....Was earl Rodolph one?—
What have I said?....In mercy say not Yes. [*She pauses.*
Would I had been a beggar's brat, an outcast,
And not a murderer's heir!

ANSELM.

Your virtuous mother,
Now a bright saint in heav'n, did not survive
Her knowledge of this dreadful enterprise.

ALICIA.

Blest be her memory ! But the infant Earl,
Young Edmund, died he fairly ?

ANSELM.

Rumour tells,
That bathing in wild Arun's rocky channel,
One sultry day, at distance from his guardian,
He perish'd in the waves.

ALICIA.

Saidst thou his guardian ?
My father, as next kinsman, had that trust.
You seem incredulous ; be candid ; own,
The honours that made Edmund's life most precious
Could not avert disease nor accident.
The heir of England perish'd in a storm ;
And might not Arundel's young heir be drown'd
Without his *guardian's* guilt ?

ANSELM.

The father's murder,
Prov'd by too certain facts, is scarce denied
By Rodolph, who with faint excuses seeks
To gloss the damned deed. Young Edmund's fate,

Involv'd in dark obscurity, permits
 Kind charity to hope the reigning Earl
 Did not again impawn his deathless soul
 For perishable honours.

ALICIA.

Blessed hope!

The murderer of a child must be abandon'd,
 Reprobate, lost to grace. Edmund and Rodolph
 Might have encounter'd in the world's rude conflicts,
 Till mutual wrongs engender'd thirst of blood.
 I do not, Anselm, justify the crime.
 Can tears erase the record? Can my prayers
 Procure the balm of mercy to console
 The conscious sinner? Thinkest thou, good father,
 Blood may be pardon'd? Wherefore should this minstrel
 In his wild wanderings talk of death and *vengeance*?

ANSELM.

Let not a vagrant maniac's senseless ravings
 Unfix thy holy hopes. Yet when I see thee,
 Generous, devout and blameless in thy manners,
 Even in this den of carnage, this rude scene
 Of lewd misrule, expos'd to the contagion
 Of universal vice,—dear, friendless maid,
 I wish thee shelter'd in some peaceful convent,

Safe from the vengeance that may one day strike
The unrepenting cause of Edmund's death.

ALICIA.

You call'd me *friendless*....Will you leave me, Anselm?

ANSELM.

Never. My promise to thy dying mother
Compels my residence mid these foul scenes,
A loth spectator, a reluctant witness
Of deeds my soul abhors. [A horn blows.

ALICIA.

'Tis Roderic's horn.
Some tidings from my father.
[Alicia and Anselm advance into the hall. The oriel
closes.]

Enter RODERIC.

RODERIC.

Save you, lady!

ALICIA.

Is the Earl safe?

RODERIC.

Aye, and victorious too.

ALICIA.

De Courcy then is vanquish'd?

RODERIC.

Not so fast.

I left my lord some distance from his foe,—
But in the guidance of a trusty spy,
And cheer'd by happy omens. He hath taken
A lady captive, by my troth a fair one,
Too fair to venture far in these rude times
With few attendants, and those coward slaves
Who fled at the first onset of our archers.

ALICIA.

Wherefore attack them? Were they enemies?

RODERIC.

We staid not to inquire. The lady's trappings
Spoke her of noble birth, and gave us hopes
Of ample ransom. By my halydame!
It would have been a cheap and bloodless conquest,
But for the valour of an aged knight,
Who, singly fighting, curs'd the recreants,
And madly brav'd our army.

ALICIA.

Was he slain?

RODERIC.

Would he had died before we met! He cost us
Ten as brave fellows as e'er bent the bow
Or handled battle-axe. I had him down,
And held my poniard to his throat, when Rodolph
Commanded me to spare.

ALICIA.

Ah! that was mercy.

RODERIC.

I left him life enough to tell his tale;
But he has fought his last.

ALICIA.

Ah, the poor lady!

What must she suffer!

RODERIC.

Take good care, sweet mistress,
You are not bid to ask a blessing from her.
Sigebert but snatch'd one kiss, when Rodolph's lance
Fell'd him to th' earth. "Ruffian," he cried, "thy life
"Would be a poor atonement for this insult."

O! how I laugh'd with splenetic delight
 To see earl Rodolph with his bonnet off,
 His knee half bent, address the captive maid,
 Most quaintly fashioning his martial voice
 To tender consolations; whilst his prisoner,
 Regardless of his soothings, cast on earth,
 Fill'd the wide air with shrieks, and rent her mantle
 To stanch the old Knight's bleeding wounds!

[*Alicia weeps.*

ANSELM.

And canst thou
 Repeat this tale with barbarous exultation?

RODERIC.

War is my business, beadsman; prayer is thine.
 I have not led the Arundelian broad-swords
 These twenty years, to heed a woman's shrieks,
 Or faint at sight of blood. But I delay—
 Rodolph hath sent his captives to his castle,
 With special charge to guard the lady well,
 Yet still to treat her nobly. He so talk'd
 Of high respect and deference, as we tender'd
 Our fealty, that I can shrewdly augur
 He'll change his truncheon for a shepherd's crook;
 His bugle-horn for flageolets and tabors.

We shall have nights of joyous festival,
Not days begrim'd with war.

*[The wounded Knight and the Lady are borne across
the bottom of the stage.]*

ALICIA.

Ah! see, they bear
The wounded soldier, faint and deadly pale.
Haste, father; try thy powers medicinal
Ere life's dim spark be quench'd. The lady too—
How deep the anguish of that woe-fraught look!
Dear injur'd sufferer! thou shalt be my care.

[Exit Alicia.]

RODERIC.

The prisoners must be kept apart. You, Anselm,
Would render special service to our master,
If at confession you persuade the Knight
To own the lady's lineage: he has breath
Enough to answer thee.

ANSELM.

My office, Roderic,
Bids me console affliction, not betray it.

[Exit Anselm.]

RODERIC.

Well spoken, Friar ; I love thee for thy bluntness.
Now for my message to the Seneschal :
He will not shrink at treachery. What, ho, Geoffrey !
Where do you loiter ?

Enter GEOFFREY.

RODERIC.

Rodolph sends you greeting.
The Earl is vex'd with various fantasies,
Which haunt him even on this eventful verge
Of his decisive conflict with De Courcy.
Mark me ; I have a tedious tale to tell.

GEOFFREY.

Our master might have found a messenger
Apter at tedious tales.

RODERIC.

True ; but such varlets
Are not safe guardians of a precious prize.
None of thy gibes,—observe me. We have gain'd
A vassal of De Courcy's, and discover'd
That all is disappointment in his castle.
Fitzalan the expected bridegroom loiters,

And fair Matilda weeps. The Baron climbs
His watch-tower every morn, looks east and south,
Nor knight, nor squire, nor pursuivant approaches.
The road is throng'd with messengers, all asking
"Saw you Fitzalan, sir?" "Good friend, not I;
"Who may Fitzalan be?" "O, a huge hero,
"Who swallow'd armies, ate up crocodiles,
"Carried a city on his back: Pendragon
"Was but a puny whipster to this worthy,
"Who travels from the Holy Land on purpose
"To wed the great De Courcy's beauteous heiress,
"And tear the barony of Arundel
"From lion-hearted Rodolph." Is't not strange
Where this dread chief can be? I greatly fear
He will not be at hand to welcome us;
For we propose this very night to visit
The castle of De Courcy.

GEOFFREY.

Their dismay
 Puts you in pleasant mood.

RODERIC.

O! such a tale
The varlet told of the purveyor's sorrows,
Of tasteful viands spoilt, of goodly garments

Prepar'd but never worn, of strolling minstrels,
 Of mimics, morris-dancers, licens'd fools
 Lur'd to the Baron's castle by the rumour
 Of nuptial festival. A famish'd crowd,
 They now besiege his gates. Thinkest thou, Geoffrey,
 This may-game band will utter pleasant jests,
 When Rodolph forces the ill-guarded postern,
 Bounds o'er the fosse, darts through the castle yard,
 Gains the strong keep, and from the watch-tower hurls
 De Courey's headless body, bidding it
 Go seek Matilda's long expected bridegroom?

GEOFFREY.

Their theme will be brave Roderic, who staid
 Devising pleasant tales, remote from danger;
 While Rodolph laid his rival's hold in ashes.

RODERIC.

I have been 'custom'd to thy taunts too long
 To mark thy malice. Open is my hatred.
 Geoffrey, my soul detests all subtlety,
 And scorns the man whose dangerous guile hath chang'd
 Earl Rodolph's heart, and bade it yield to fears
 Beneath a soldier. By the rood, he'll soon
 Make giants out of bulrushes, and spectres
 Of every trembling osier. This poor Minstrel,

This thing of madness and bare indigence,
 Has power to quail his blood. He breaks my slumbers
 To ask me if I think him knight or 'squire,
 Merchant or student, base or highly born,
 Native or stranger. Is it thou, wise Geoffrey,
 Who teachest the great earl of Arundel
 Such mercenary aims, such baby fears?

GEOFFREY.

No. Rodolph's fears are natives of his soul.

RODERIC.

Then I'd not change my forester's array
 For an earl's coronet and ermine robe.
 I would not utter such a dolorous groan
 As burst from him last night, for all this castle.
 You are commanded as you value life,
 To keep the pris'ners separate, but safely.
 You further are to mark the Minstrel's moods,
 To note down all his vagrant flights, his day-dreams
 And moon-struck mummeries; then, if your wit
 Can fashion from the precious tablature
 A horrid somewhat full of plots and dangers,
 Your master, while he shakes in every limb,
 Will pay you nobly for your diligence.

GEOFFREY.

What hast thou more to say?

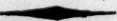
RODERIC.

He further bids you
Double the guard, walk hourly round the towers,
See that the marksmen keep their bows prepar'd.
Look to the yeomen: if two menials whisper,
Crouch and observe them; be all eye, all ear,
A ready smile still fixt upon your face,
And treachery in your ruthless heart. Shame! shame!
That Arundel's great earl should stoop to baseness.
If grandeur must be thus preserv'd, give Roderic
The simple knight's fee left him by his father,
Content, an honest heart, and this good sword.

[Exeunt severally.]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.



SCENE

A Gothic apartment.

MATILDA DE COURCY *is discovered on a couch.* ALICIA
and attendants standing by her.

ALICIA.

SHE will revive. The paleness on her cheek
Is not death's livid hue ; her pulse beats stronger ;
These cordials will restore her. Stand apart ;—
You check the air's free course. Fair broken lily !
I could kneel by thee, bathe thee with my tears,
And mourn at once thy fortunes and my own.
Perhaps, even now, thy plighted lord with groans
Deplores thy fate ; perhaps thy aged father,
The withering head of some illustrious house,
Weeps in thy loss life's last and only joy.

ATTENDANT.

When Geoffrey tore her from the wounded knight
She shriek'd, and called out "Father."

ALICIA.

Barbarous Geoffrey!

Couldst thou deny a dying enemy
The last poor solace of a daughter's kiss?
Thy master will detest thy cruelty.
Thou *worse* than *murderer*! *Murderer* did I say?
Strange *I* should use that term.

ATTENDANT.

The lady moves.

ALICIA.

Retire....Much injur'd stranger, a poor maiden
Would tender you her faithful services.

MATILDA.

I know you not—your voice is mild—you weep.
I have no tears; unutterable grief
Hath dried my burning eye.

ALICIA.

Lean on my bosom.

Can sympathizing pity offer comfort?

MATILDA.

Didst thou say comfort? Tell me these proud towers,
Dark with o'erwhelming battlements, obscure

With triple walls, are not earl Rodolph's fortress,
 The haunt of his marauders, and I'll hear thee
 Inform me that the venerable man
 From whom ye tore me lives in peace and honour;
 Tell me the blood which stains this mantle flow'd not
 From one whose life is dearer than my own,
 And I will listen. Yes, a summer's day
 Would be too short to hear thee. Soft, I rave—
 Are you not Rodolph's daughter?

ALICIA.

Do not hate me.

MATILDA.

No. I will kneel to *thee*: this lowly posture
 Suits my fall'n fortunes. Let me once more see him,
 Once more embrace that honour'd mangled form.

ALICIA.

O rise!—Whom do you mean?

MATILDA.

The wounded knight;

He hath no other name.

ALICIA.

Alas! thy wish
 Exceeds my bounded power: but holy Anselm,

Whose dearest pleasures are compassion's duties,
 All night hath watch'd beside the stranger's couch,
 Supplying all thy cares, and minist'ring
 Even to the mind's distemper. He is skill'd
 In every healing art. I'll summon him;
 Heaven grant his tidings may relieve thy anguish!
 [*Alicia speaks to her attendants. The Minstrel's harp
 is heard at a distance.*]

MATILDA.

The soul of harmony is in that music:
 Sure 'tis a dirge to hymn some parting spirit.

ALICIA.

A youth, like thee a pris'ner, daily hails
 The rising sun from yonder eastern turret
 With this sweet melody. O mark that pause,
 That dying strain; the nightingale's soft notes
 Are not more plaintive. Oft he plays all night,
 And I have listen'd till the morning's ray
 Broke on my unclos'd eye.

MATILDA.

Know'st thou his story?

ALICIA.

Sorrow hath mark'd him for her victim, lady,

And prey'd upon him till the heav'nly spark
Of reason is extinguish'd.

MATILDA.

Wretched youth !
Yet happier far than I ; fantastic joys
Usurp the place of sad realities.
Perhaps, like the caged lark, whose fluttering wings
Beat its vex'd sides, he pours this matin song
To hail imagin'd freedom.

ALICIA.

No : his visions
Are of that mournful cast which suits his fortunes.
Thou never saw'st a goodlier form ; loose curls,
Black as the raven's plume, o'erhang a brow
High-arch'd in manly majesty. His voice
Sounds like a deep-ton'd trumpet, strong and tuneful ;
And when he strikes the harp, his noble gesture
Resembles Phœbus in the tapestry,
Tuning his lyre to Jove.

MATILDA.

What are his themes ?

ALICIA.

Disastrous love sometimes, but oft'ner war ;

The deeds of paladins in Holy Land
 Oppos'd to paynim Moors, and Saracens.
 He talks of cities storm'd, of camps surpris'd,
 Of single fights, protracted till the moon
 Shone on the helmets of the combatants
 And chill'd their smarting wounds. Then will he tell
 Of tournaments and triumphs, armed knights,
 And steeds caparison'd, and lovely dames
 On milk-white palfreys riding, and attended
 By dwarfs in gorgeous mantles. His strong fancy
 Gives such reality to all he sings,
 That ladies, knights and dwarfs have pass'd before me.
 Or I have seen the bard, a champion arm'd,
 Burst from captivity to lift his lance
 Against my father, and avenge the insults
 He suffers in these walls.

MATILDA.

Know you his name?

ALICIA.

I nothing know, but that his ship was wreck'd
 Upon a sandy beach near Arundel.
 The crew all perish'd. Ah! you tremble, lady:
 Is it returning faintness?

MATILDA.

The sick heart
Is oft appall'd by shadows.

ATTENDANT, *coming forward.*

Father Anselm
Tenders his service to the gentle stranger.

Enter ANSELM.

ALICIA, *supporting Matilda.*

Haste, holy father. Misery never wore
A form more suited to enforce thy pity.
Hast thou good tidings? does the warrior live?
Sweet mourner! See, she prays. Heav'n grant *her* prayers
Though she should ask my bane!

ANSELM.

Generous Alicia!
We must be private.

ALICIA.

I will call the Minstrel.
She listen'd to the story of his wrongs;
Perhaps his harp may sooth her.

[*Exeunt Alicia and attendants.*]

ANSELM.

Save you, lady ! 

I come not to insult you with those maxims
Which iron apathy alone can utter.

I know your story. Daughter of De Courcy,
Fair helpless pris'ner to the barb'rous Rodolph,
My soul yearns o'er your unexampled wrongs.

MATILDA.

Thy sacred garb bespeaks Religion's son,
Appointed to her offices of love
And faith unshaken. Art thou the good friar,
The skilful leech, of whom Alicia told me?
And com'st thou from my breathless father, charg'd
With blessings for his orphan girl?

ANSELM.

Too surely

The Baron's wounds baffled all human aid.
Look not so wild: his mortal throes are past;
He rests, where fell oppressors ne'er shall rest,
In peaceful hope.

MATILDA.

Weep'st thou for me? O Anselm,
When thou strew'st dust upon De Courcy's grave,
Canst thou not hide the lost Matilda there?

ANSELM.

I gave the dying Baron my firm faith
Even at the peril of my life to guard thee;
And sacred be that oath!

MATILDA.

O rising sun!

How gaily didst thou gild my native towers
But yester-morn! Hope whisper'd, young Fitzalan
Would ere the evening, with a bridegroom's haste,
Return from Palestine. Busied till noon
Amongst my maids, I sorted meet attire
For nuptial pomp; then rumour brought us tidings,
That Rodolph, our remorseless enemy,
In stern defiance of the recent truce,
With privacy collected numerous bands,
Intending to assault us unprepar'd....

ANSELM.

His conscience never checks a treacherous scheme
Which his revenge suggests.

MATILDA.

My tender father,
Anxious to shield me from impending war,
Propos'd my instant flight. The neighbouring convent
By Edith founded, promis'd me protection.

At evening we rode forth, our menial pages
 Our only guard: fearless of instant danger,
 My sire and I convers'd of former days:
 I saw the moon-beam gild the abbey wall:
 We turn'd our steeds, and heard a cry, "Earl
 Rodolph!"

ANSELM.

The lightning darts not swifter on its victim,
 Than the fierce Earl, active in injury,
 Accomplishes his dreadful purposes.
 Your only safety lies in privacy.
 When vengeance, av'rice, or ambition goad
 His rising hopes, Rodolph disclaims compassion.
 Soon as he knows your title to his honours,
 Death, or to virtuous minds a fate more dreadful,
 Will be your lot. To guard you from discovery,
 I have remov'd from your dead sire each token
 Of birth, and military rank, unmark'd
 Even by our wily Seneschal, whose malice
 I hope to frustrate, and, ere morn return,
 Free you from thralldom.

MATILDA.

Teach me how to further
 Thy generous views.

ANSELM.

Concealment is your hope.
 Let not Alicia know your name or lineage.

That maid, though pure as angel innocence,
 Has all your sex's weakness: mild and timid,
 Her fond heart clings to her fierce sire with love
 Worthy a nobler object. He returns
 Her filial truth with ardent, doting passion.
 And oft her soft entreaties have detain'd
 His ruffian bands from purpos'd war. I've seen
 The proud steeds pant, and paw the earth; while she
 Unlac'd her father's beaver, and led back
 The sternly smiling chieftain, who in sport
 Would often hang his buckler on her arm,
 And bid her bear it as his well-earn'd prize.

MATILDA.

Is there a hope for me? In Rodolph's towers
 Can mild benevolence and pity sooth
 The horrors of despair? O gentle Anselm!
 Sure you must oft have visited the maniac
 Whom Rodolph keeps in bonds?

ANSELM.

I scarce have seen him.
 Our castle is extensive, and my duty
 Calls me to those whose maladies admit
 Of *human* aid.

MATILDA.

Alicia takes deep interest
 In his unhappy fate.

ANSELM.

The eye of youth
Delights in goodly forms.

MATILDA.

Dost thou conceive
He is a knight? for so in truth she deems him.—
Came he from Palestine?—Does no device
Betray his rank?—Hath he a foreign accent?—
Did all his shipmates perish?

ANSELM.

Raging waves
Ingulph'd both crew and cargo. Such a storm
I never witness'd. Even these turrets shook,
Menac'd with instant ruin. Some days after,
Our foresters discovered in a copse
This maniac suited in a minstrel's habit;
A neighbouring sheep-boy was his sole companion.
Wild was the stranger's tale; the village lad's
Was simple: on the beach his father found
The shipwreck'd outcast, who implor'd his aid
To guide him to the castle of De Courcy.

MATILDA, *in great agitation.*

De Courcy, saidst thou?

ANSELM.

Aye: thy purpos'd nuptials
 Would needs attract a rout of brain-sick bards.
 But waste not on a vagrant's tale those thoughts
 Which ought to muse on means for thy deliverance.
 Remember, *thou* art heir of Arundel!
 I can produce clear proof of Edmund's murder,
 And Rodolph's claims are forfeited by guilt.
 Farewell! Be wise, and prosperous fate awaits thee.
 [Exit Anselm.]

MATILDA, *alone*.

I will regard thy counsel. Soft:—I meant
 To ask permission to attend my father
 To decent sepulture. Yet, might not grief
 Extort my secret, and some deep-ton'd sigh
 Breathe out my story to the murderous crew
 Who pant for my destruction? I'll avoid
 This Minstrel too. Good Anselm seems to think him
 A common vagrant. Should he chance to know me,
 My hopes are all destroy'd.

Re-enter ALICIA.

ALICIA.

How fares my friend?—
 Bred in the pomp of solitary greatness,
 I have been still estranged from friendship's joys,
 Yet wish to share them with a mind like thine.

I would not violate the sanctuary
 Where you inshrine your griefs. Our love is young.
 I only ask to sit by you all day,
 And give you tear for tear.

MATILDA, *embracing Alicia.*

Speak less endearing,
 Or I shall utter what——

ALICIA, *interrupting her.*

Confide not in me ;
 Remember who I am ; yet so remember
 As not to hate the guiltless. Thy brave friend
 Hath suffer'd frail mortality's last pang,
 And now they chant his requiem ; while my maids
 Adorn his corse with many a funeral herb.
 Trust me, he shall have Christian sepulture.
 Tonight, when all is still, I'll lead thee to him,
 And let thee feast in woe.

MATILDA.

Art thou indeed
 The tyrant's daughter ?

ALICIA.

Spare that painful theme ;
 And, when thou tellest o'er thy beads, remember

X The poor Alicia.—See, the Minstrel comes.
 His harp may lead thee from thy own distress
 To muse on fancied woes.

MATILDA.

I dare not see him.

ALICIA.

The youth is gentle in his wayward moods.
 Fear not: I'll be thy guard.

[*Matilda lets down her veil. Enter the Minstrel
 and attendants. Geoffrey at a distance.*]

ALICIA, to the Minstrel.

Hast thou a strain
 Which can subdue despair, and charm to silence
 The busy cares which haunt a pensive soul
 Musing on former pleasures?

First ATTENDANT.

O good Minstrel!
 Give us 'Fair Agnes and Sir Hildebrand.'

Second ATTENDANT.

No: that is mournful. Let us have 'The Knight
 Who stole the Shepherd's Daughter.'

Third ATTENDANT.

Or the tale
Of 'The Fat Friar,' which Motley tells so quaintly.

ALICIA.

Peace.

The Minstrel sings.

Full in my sails the breezes blow;
To distant Palestine I go;
My lady fair, adieu!
Yet while the tempests round me beat,
And while the paynim foe I meet,
Oh still, sweet maid, be true!

What though returning pilgrims tell
Of warriors who in combat fell
With Mahmoud's cursed crew;
Forbear to tremble at the tale:
No dangers shall thy knight assail,
If thou, sweet maid, be true.

[*During this song Matilda discovers great agitation, and at last faints. Alicia supports her.*]

ALICIA, to the attendants.

Bear her to th' open air:—when she revives
Her sense may wander; do not mark her ravings.
Wilt thou begone? [To the Minstrel.
[As they bear away Matilda her veil falls off.]

MINSTREL, *dropping his harp.*

Matilda ! *my* Matilda !

ALICIA.

Oh ! press not thus : you but increase her terror.

MINSTREL.

One look ! My soul hangs on thee

ALICIA, *looking significantly at Geoffrey.*

Madman ! off,—

Mean'st thou to slay her? Help—

[Exeunt with Matilda.

GEOFFREY, *coming forward.*

Come, noble harper,

On with thy ditty. If the proem kills,

The close must needs be mournful. By the rood,

I fear 'twill make me weep. I guess the end :

The gallant knight returns from Palestine,

And the poor lady faints for joy.—

MINSTREL.

O Heavens !

GEOFFREY.

The *foul fiend*, then, hath left you ; for you speak

A holy word distinct. A miracle !

The lunatic is cur'd ; the crafty madman

Becomes a praying fool. But know, sir knight,
 The fair Alicia boasts strange skill in magic.
 She casts out dæmons, disenchants the wretches
 Whom hags have spell-bound, and by rare devices
 Unriddles secrets and discovers plots.

How will the Earl caress her! He will hang
 De Courcy's richest jewel on her neck.

Ah! groan again: cheerly, brave youth! the spirit
 Will soon be exorcis'd. Here comes th' enchantress.

- [*The Minstrel appears overwhelmed with anguish
 during this scene. Re-enter Alicia.*]

ALICIA.

Have you forgot your duty, Seneschal?
 Thrice hath a courier thunder'd at our gates,
 Exclaiming "From Earl Rodolph." Yet none hasten
 To mount the watch-tower, or to lower the draw-bridge.
 Better instruct the idlers in their duty,
 Than loiter thus among my maids, a spy
 On my retirements.

MINSTREL.

Doth the lady live?

ALICIA.

She lives. See, Geoffrey, how his noble heart
 Speaks through his malady! He fears he wrong'd her.
 His phrensy now returns.

MINSTREL, *with affected insanity.*

I saw her once
In Stephen's court. The gallants prais'd her beauty.
I wooed her for my wife, but she disdain'd me.
The moon was high; my thoughts were proud and sinful;
I snatch'd this jewel from her hand by force :
Would I could give it back ! for since that day
Peace hath forsa'en my heart.

ALICIA.

Oh piteous wildness !
Hark how they knock ! Haste, Geoffrey, to the portal.
[Exit Geoffrey. A pause ; during which Alicia
looks at the Minstrel with a mixture of grief,
tenderness and pity.]

ALICIA.

Seek not disguise : no traitor now is near.
Appear one moment in thy native form,
And trust a maid, whose firm and faithful heart
Feels, aye too deeply feels, for thy misfortunes.

MINSTREL.

Daughter of Rodolph, if thy father's spirit
Prompts thy fell soul to deeds of cruel fraud,
Take my unvalu'd life. I am FITZALAN.
But by the bond of maidhood I conjure thee

To save a lady, lovely as thyself,
As nobly born, and once, alas ! as happy.

ALICIA.

Yes, happier still ; more blest in thy firm faith
Than sad Alicia in her father's greatness.
Think'st thou I have been nurs'd with bears and wolves,
And caught their pitiless ferocity?
I—who have wept and shriek'd when guilt hath perish'd,
Can I exult o'er dying innocence,
Or stain my soul with fraud?

FITZALAN.

Did giddy chance
Project the interview, whose dire surprise
Betray'd my bosom secret? I have met
Danger and death upon the troubled deep ;
Brav'd them in hard-fought fields ; yet knew not terror :
But now my nerves, subdu'd to infant weakness,
Vibrate at every sound.

ALICIA.

Back to thy prison ;
This is no place for long discourse. Resume
Thy seeming wildness ; let no start of rage,
No fraudulent lure, betray thee. Shun my father

Till I can frustrate Geoffrey's bloody schemes.
Anon I'll visit thee.

FITZALAN.

Can treachery wear
That angel look of pity? If she's faithless,
Truth hath deserted man.

ALICIA.

Give me the ring.
Thy own Matilda shall receive this pledge
Of holy vows, and Heav'n confirm that contract.

[*Exit Fitzalan.*]

ALICIA, *alone.*

Daughter of Rodolph!—Did I ask from Heav'n
That dire progenitor, or stake my soul
For Arundel's polluted coronet?
Did I guide Edmund to the mortal snare,
Or aim the murderous poniard at his bosom,
That this proud knight should taunt me with my birth?
I did not stoop to syren blandishments;
I told no love-tale, wooing him to spurn
His plighted lady.—Chief, I love not thee.
Thou art Matilda's. O most blest Matilda!
Rich in Fitzalan's faith. For thee, sweet maid,
The bravest heart in Britain is appall'd.

Thine is this ring. Fitzalan too is thine.
 A *murderer's* daughter ne'er must hope for faith.
 Terror and anguish are her patrimony:
 Soon will the gathering tempest press her down;
 Death is her bridegroom, and her dow'r the grave.

[*Erit.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE

*A banqueting-room. RODOLPH, seated under a canopy,
is discovered carousing with his knights.*

RODOLPH.

BRING me the golden goblet; crown it high
With wine of Cyprus. Health and length of days
To the brave soldier, whose victorious hand
Planted my banner on the battlements!
Now pledge me, Roderic.

RODERIC.

Thus on my knees.
Honour, and fame, and happiness to Rodolph!
And may the foes of his illustrious house
Fall, as De Courcy fell!

[These words are repeated by the rest of the knights.]

RODOLPH.

Thanks, gallant friends!
Yet much I marvel that ye could not find

The Baron's corse among the numerous slain.
 Who saw him in the conflict? Ye must know him:
 Some two years hence he took the cross; that sign
 Would be upon his arm.

SIGEBERT.

Our search was hasty:
 Odo, who staid behind to rase the walls
 And fire the gates, may bring you clearer tidings.

RODOLPH.

Even as I led the onset I beheld
 Some stragglers steal along the western hills,
 And shape their course direct for Chichester:
 Perhaps the timid Baron and Matilda
 Might be the fugitives.

RODERIC.

Regard them not.
 When the old fox returns, he'll find the hound
 Hath kennel'd in his lair. His troops are vanquish'd,
 His treasures seiz'd, his castle storm'd, his vassals
 Round their own hearths now crowd in fearful safety,
 And tell their beldames tales of Rodolph's might,
 Transcending far the deeds of giant Arthur.

GEOFFREY.

Will my dread lord vouchsafe to grant me audience?

SIGEBERT.

This is the soldier's banquet:—hence, old man !
When we regale, the drones of peace are silent.

RODERIC.

What, Geoffrey ! the wise Seneschal ! whose tongue
Performs more welcome service than our swords :
He'll tell us wonders ; how a raven prated,
Or how a furious mole hath delv'd beneath
This castle and will shake it.

GEOFFREY.

If the mole
Should be Fitzalan and Matilda——

RODOLPH, *rising in great agitation.*

Knights,
On with your banquet, and regard us not.

*[He comes forward with Geoffrey to the front of
the stage.]*

What know'st thou of Fitzalan or Matilda ?

GEOFFREY.

The pris'ners, my good lord——

RODOLPH.

Are they all safe ?

GEOFFREY.

The wounded veteran sleeps in death. The lady——

RODOLPH.

Her sorrows touch my gentle daughter's heart.
Even while Alicia hail'd my safe return,
She wept, and pray'd my pity on two lovers
Of most disastrous lot; the rhyming maniac
And the poor damsel whom we late surpris'd.

GEOFFREY.

Knew she the lady's name?

RODOLPH.

'Tis Montacute;
The Minstrel's, Scudamore.

GEOFFREY.

And have you promis'd
To give *them* liberty?

RODOLPH.

Dost thou suppose
I could reject my weeping girl's request?
She clasp'd my neck, and cried "A boon, dear father!
"Grant me one boon; so may Heav'n bless your
"death-bed

“ With sweet remembrance of an act of mercy,
 “ And pardon all your faults !” Oh ! Seneschal,
 Think’st thou her innocent and pious prayers
 Will reach the throne of grace, and blot the record
 Of Edmund’s blood ?

GEOFFREY.

My lord !

RODOLPH.

Will the dire image
 Of the drown’d boy no more return ? I saw him
 Even as I forc’d De Courcy’s gates ; I saw
 His dripping locks cling to his bloated face.
 I heard his shriek amid the roar of battle.
 No time, no change of scene can from these eyes
 Remove the vision of his dying struggle.

GEOFFREY.

The maid is beauteous——

RODOLPH.

What to me is beauty ?
 I murder’d beauty. Rosy was *his* cheek ;
 His eye a morning sun-beam ; and his arms,
 As he extended them in vain for mercy—
 Oh ! horror ! horror ! fatal pomp ! curst greatness !

Would I could quit this state, and once again
Enjoy *one* peaceful hour!

GEOFFREY.

Thou mayst *resign*
What thy hard toils acquir'd. De Courcy's daughter
Is near at hand. She doubtless will accept
The fair demesnes of Arundel. Her knight,
The fam'd Fitzalan, now thy guest, will join,
And claim full heirship: they'll unearl thee soon,
And lead thee to some quiet monast'ry;
Where, in a friar's cowl, the mighty Rodolph
May die a good old man.

RODOLPH.

What mean'st thou, babbler?

GEOFFREY.

I mean, my lord, Fitzalan and Matilda;
Not Montacute and Scudamore—

RODOLPH.

Hold, knave!

Wouldst thou asperse my daughter?

GEOFFREY.

Prove my words:
Send for the lady, probe her to the soul;

Disguise will quickly drop its ill-form'd vizard.
 If my assertions fail of fullest proof,
 Forget my former services, and plunge
 Your dagger in my heart.

RODOLPH.

Bring her this instant.

[He paces the hall in great agitation.—Exit Geoffrey.]

SIGEBERT.

Surely, our lord's unwell.

RODERIC.

Oh ! he hath taken
 A dose of Geoffrey's poison. I have mark'd,
 He never spends an hour with that sly varlet
 But he is thus distemper'd.

RODOLPH.

Gallant friends,
 Suspend the feast awhile : important business
 Requires my instant presence : that perform'd,
 Pleasure shall take the lead, and we'll carouse
 Till the sun breaks upon the lengthen'd vigil.

SIGEBERT.

Long life, and health, and happiness to Rodolph !
[Exeunt knights.]

RODOLPH, *solus.*

My daughter leagu'd in concert with my foes?
It cannot be. True, I have greatly sinn'd;
But therefore must the fiend ingratitude
Profane the holy seat of filial duty?

Re-enter GEOFFREY, leading in Matilda.

RODOLPH.

Your pardon, fair one, if I wish'd to view
The prize which war made mine. The glancing moon
Shone on your visage when your father fell,
And I perceiv'd 'twas fair. Look not offended;
Such beauty needs not fear the eye of day:
No envious stain obscures your brow; your cheek

He takes her hand.

Glow with the vermeil of a half-blown rose.
Nay, even your scorn becomes you. I could call it
The sovereign majesty of conscious beauty.
Your name, I think, 's Matilda?

MATILDA.

Yes.

RODOLPH.

De Courcy?

Matilda starts.

No, not De Courcy, I meant Montacute:
Pardon my tripping tongue, which, grown familiar

With a detested name, will utter sounds
 Discordant to us both. For, sweet Matilda,
 My soul with *everlasting* hate pursues
 The remnant of De Courcy's rival house.
 But, could *thy* heart incline to love a warrior
 Grown gray in hard-fought fields, thou shouldst be
 dower'd

In my fair earldom. Wilt thou be my bride?
 My lance and sword shall rust in idleness;—
 What says my blushing fair?

MATILDA.

It cannot be.

RODOLPH.

O rich in all thy sex's wayward wiles!
 Teach me to woo. Though love's soft tales now suit not
 The hoarseness of my martial voice, proud lady,
 Some thirty years ago I was a gallant,
 Gain'd the chief prize in tilts and tournaments,
 And won the easy heart of many a maid.
 I shone, the great *Fitzalan* of the day.....
 Again alarm'd?

MATILDA.

Why taunt me with *Fitzalan*?

RODOLPH.

I taunt not *thee*. Thy love is Scudamore,
 The maniac Minstrel, whose distemper'd brain
 Accuses thee of coyness in his songs.
 He talks of mighty deeds; I can perform
 What he but feigns. Behold my seat of state:
 De Courcy's banner is my canopy.
 Mark the emblazonry: my foe was noble:
 The passant lions of Plantagenet,
 Giv'rr by the count of Anjou for his prowess,
 Are quarter'd on his shield. Think'st thou the maid
 Who wrought the gay embroidery divin'd
 Its future destination?

MATILDA.

Dost thou know
 The appointed hour of vengeance?

RODOLPH.

Vengeance, saidst thou?
 What mean those words?

GEOFFREY, *apart to Rodolph.*

This casket, stor'd with jewels,
 The heir-loom of your rival's barony,
 Will force her full avowal.

Of ample spoils: methinks these precious gems
Might buy an empire. Wilt thou deign to wear
This onyx, pendent to a di'mond chain?
This girdle of rich pearls? What's here?—A bracelet
Bound with a braided lock of amber hair:
Mean relic to be lodg'd among such treasures.
Hence—give it to the flames. [To Geoffrey.]

MATILDA.

Not for thy life.
Mine is that sacred pledge, that sad memorial.
I sav'd it from the ravage of the grave,
Where sleeps my sister's faded form—

GEOFFREY.

See, Rodolph,
I told you but the truth.

MATILDA.

O! cruel Fortune!
If thou art mutable, revolve thy wheel,
And lay the scornful victor by the vanquish'd.

GEOFFREY, *to Rodolph, who seems affected.*

Hear her mad insults.

MATILDA.

I can die, earl Rodolph;
I can partake my slaughter'd father's grave,
And sleep beside him till the day of doom,
Amid the injur'd race of Arundel:
But can thy marble tombs and leaden cerements
In dark oblivion keep us *then*? No, tyrant!
The kindling dust will heave the sepulchre.

RODOLPH.

Know'st thou my power? Cease, rash upbraider!

MATILDA.

See

The remnant of De Courcy's ill-starr'd house,
And satiate, *here*, thy everlasting hate:
Here shed my blood, where good earl Edmund's
flow'd.

RODOLPH, *in a distracted manner.*

Not here—'twas in the forest—Outlaws slew him—
Why this appeal to me?—Am I an outlaw?
His boy too died—Could I prevent the child—

GEOFFREY.

Be calm, my lord.

[*To Matilda.*] The much lamented fate
Of his great kinsman still affects his senses.
Unhappily there chanc'd some cruel discord
Between the nobles ere earl Edmund fell,
And slander, ever busy—

MATILDA.

Spare thy glossings.

There is an awful register in Heaven,
Where Truth engraves our deeds on adamant.
Look to thy master; he requires thy soothings.

[*Going, she stops, and speaks to Rodolph.*]

Rodolph, I pity thee; thy destin'd victim
Prepares for her last journey with forgiveness.
Thou'lt find me kneeling by my father's corse,
Imploring mercy to his parted spirit,
And penitence for thine. [*Exit Matilda.*]

RODOLPH.

What! are my deeds
All blaz'd and naked to the eye of day?
Slave! didst thou tell her that I drown'd the boy?
Thou wast the only witness; and in fact
Partaker of the crime.

GEOFFREY.

Pardon, my lord ;

She never nam'd the boy.

RODOLPH.

Oh ! hell-hound, Conscience,

Can nought assuage thy ravin ? neither tears,

Nor midnight groans, nor prayers in secret breath'd ?

What ! wilt thou sink me to a trembling idiot ;

A wayward babe ? Has murder then no price ?

What boot your crosses, chantries, masses, friars ?

Or what the mockery of fast and penance ?

Hold—hold my bursting brain—I *will* repent—*Enter* RODERIC.

RODERIC.

A word, my lord.

RODOLPH.

Away !

[*Exit Rodolph.*]

RODERIC.

Shame on thee, Seneschal !

Is this a time for Rodolph to offend

His armed knights ? What ! send us from the banquet

That he might flatter a trim wayward girl,

Who, if he frown'd, would instant shrink to nothing ?

Shall we, his brethren of the sword, be banish'd ;

And thou, a-spy, a drone, a sycophant,
Enjoy his privacy?

GEOFFREY.

I little heed
The taunt of spleen or dotage.

RODERIC.

Learn to fear
The words of truth and blunt integrity.
How hast thou rul'd the castle? Rude disorder
Speaks in the manners of the lawless menials ;
A curse is ever on their tongues. But now
I parted a cabal who talk'd of projects
To storm the castle, of a veteran band,
Of fires oft lighted on the neighbouring hills,
And peasants train'd in secrecy to arms.
At my approach a death-like pause ensu'd ;
And when I threaten'd them with Rodolph's anger,
They mutter'd that the tyrant's days were number'd.

GEOFFREY.

How manners vary as the man grows old !
Redoubted Roderic now takes Geoffrey's part.
He turns a spy, a credulous reporter,
Who conjures up wild phantoms out of nothing,
And tilts at those who cannot see his spectres.

Guard thou thy master in the field of war;
I'll keep him from his household enemies.

RODERIC.

Thou keep him?—How?

GEOFFREY.

I have well-tried informers,
Smooth-tongu'd, and deeply vers'd in simulation.
These by my counsel, mingling with the rest,
Suggest alarms, give loose disloyal hints,
And dive into th' unwary hearer's soul.
So active are my faithful emissaries,
That not a whisper breathes within these walls
But I have warning.

RODERIC.

O! I crave your mercy.
Then it was you who lighted up last night
A lamp in th' eastern tower?

GEOFFREY.

Saidst thou a lamp?
In the east tower—what!—where the Minstrel lodges?

RODERIC.

Where are your trusty knaves? your tried informers?

Where your own subtlety, and wondrous forecast?
 But mark this adage of a plain blunt soldier,
 "The faithless never shall find faith."

Re-enter RODOLPH.

RODOLPH.

Old Anselm

Cannot be found. . As I remark'd, he only,
 Of all my household, fail'd to welcome me
 When I came loaded with De Courcy's spoils.
 Instant go seek him, Geoffrey. [*Exit Geoffrey.*]

RODERIC.

Hear me, Earl;
 We want not praying priests, but fighting friends.
 Sedition haunts thy castle; danger threatens
 E'en in the seat and centre of thy greatness.
 This have I found. [*Giving a paper.*]

If thou indeed art Rodolph,
 The brave old chief whom I serv'd faithfully,
 Resume thy native hardihood of soul,
 And in the teeth of this foul slanderer
 Assert thy lawful claim.

RODOLPH *reads*.

"All faithful and true hearts, knights and esquires,
 "villains and bondsmen, retainers on the barony and

" earldom of Arundel, are exhorted to be in readiness.
 " The lawful *heir* will soon appear ; the *usurper* shall
 " fall."

RODERIC.

Do my eyes fail?
 He trembles,—smites his breast. Can it be mockery?
 I've heard, bad deeds, when secretly committed,
 Appal the soul of man, and bend the bravest
 To infantine dismay.

Re-enter GEOFFREY.

GEOFFREY.

My lord, the friar
 Is visiting the pris'ners.

RODOLPH.

Hist, good Geoffrey :
 Mark, not a word—The *heir* of Arundel
 Returns to claim his rights.

GEOFFREY.

Impossible !

RODOLPH.

The body of the boy was never found.

GEOFFREY.

I saw it borne by Arun to the sea,
And whelm'd in the wide ocean.

RODOLPH, *recovering himself.*

Rarely manag'd.

Geoffrey, didst thou devise this pleasant jest?
Who is the heir of Arundel but Rodolph?
And Rodolph is return'd. Who th' usurper
But fall'n De Courcy? Was my faithful veteran
Confus'd, astounded by ambiguous words?
Where didst thou find this scroll?

GEOFFREY.

Where should he find it,
But where I privily dispos'd it?

RODERIC.

Chief,

I ne'er pretend to policy; yet, know,
I will not follow an *usurper's* fortunes.
If thou'rt my rightful master, I'll obey thee.
If not, the craft of thy sage counsellor
Shall ne'er unsheath old Roderic's honest sword:
Mark that, and fare ye well. [Exit Roderic.]

GEOFFREY.

What moves my lord?

RODOLPH.

The insolence of conscious obligation :
 But that's a trivial ill. This fatal paper
 Proclaims the downfall of my power. 'Tis plain
 Sedition threatens me with instant ruin.
 Long have I known my vassals disaffected ;
 And seen my soldiers, lur'd by hopes of plunder,
 Like summer-flies but sporting in the sun
 Of my prosperity. Yet thus to choose
 My hour of triumph to insult and scorn me,
 Exceeds my utmost fears. My daughter, too,
 My darling, leagu'd against me ! 'Tis too much !
 Most wretched Rodolph ! Oh the misery
 Of him who has no friend !

GEOFFREY.

My gracious lord,
 Geoffrey is faithful.

RODOLPH.

Hence—— [*looking at the paper.*
 The lawful heir
 Of Arundel, whom may it mean ?—Fitzalan ?—
 Slave, dost thou know whence sprung this far-fam'd hero,
 Who came from Syria's wars to wed Matilda ?

GEOFFREY.

Rumour describes him as a noble orphan
 Bred by the Baron's bounty. Deign, my lord,
 To recollect, if he is dangerous,
 The means to cut him off are—

RODOLPH.

I have drunk
 Too deep of guiltless blood.

GEOFFREY.

But you may see him,
 And learn the story of his former fortunes.

RODOLPH.

Are not his senses warp'd by cureless phrensy?
 Why question a rash madman? I have mark'd
 His antic wild demeanour.

GEOFFREY.

— Would a madman,
 With never-swerving care, elude all question?
 A brain-sick knight, proud of his high deserts,
 Would make our castle echo with the tale
 Of his own exploits, injuries and triumphs;

But feign'd distemper seeks obscurity,
And dwells on sorrows distant from its own.

RODOLPH.

The thought is just.

GEOFFREY.

Might I presume to dictate,
Your title should disdain all competition.
We'd fair Matilda, and unite the claims
Of the contending houses.

RODOLPH.

What! disdain'd
With her dear father's blood, fresh from the slaughter
Of her most firm adherents, shall I woo her,
And at the flames of her own blazing castle
Kindle the nuptial torch? Shall I oppose
My front, begrim'd with war, furrow'd by age,
To the smooth graces of a youthful rival,
To whom her faith is plighted, and again
Bear her soul-harrowing taunts?

GEOFFREY.

Can mighty Rodolph
Forget what cogent pleas support his suit?
Terror, th' alluring charms of pomp and power,

So dear to vanity. Can vows bestow'd
On one she deems a maniac bind her faith?

RODOLPH.

I'll see this maniac. Towers of Arundel,
Do ye now shake with horrible portent?
Ye stood the waste of war, the shock of tempests;
And shall sedition and conspiracy
Hurl your proud honours on your mighty lord?

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE

A prison. The sound of the harp is heard, as the scene rises. FITZALAN is discovered in a pensive posture.

FITZALAN.

REST, ineffectual harp! Thy silver tones,
Which lull'd the pangs of solitary woe,
Have lost their opiate power;—Matilda suffers;
While I her plighted love, I whose keen sword
Should blaze in her defence, in these vile weeds
Now seem to court the coward's idol, safety:
And like a felon, who with wary stealth
Avoids th' avenger's haunts, I shun the man
Whose life is my just forfeit.

GUARD, *speaking without.*

'Tis commanded

That none should enter.

E

ANSELM, *without.*

My profession pleads
Exemption from that order. Heaven forfend
That misery should be 'rest of ghostly comfort!

Enter ANSELM.

ANSELM.

These precious moments must be well applied.
I come from fair Matilda. See her token:
Thou dost not mark me.

FITZALAN.

Yes, I mark thee well.

ANSELM.

I know thy fortunes.

FITZALAN, *embracing Anselm with great emotion.*

Dost thou *truly* know them?

ANSELM.

Unhappy man! this phrensy is not feign'd.
Loose me. How strong his ecstasy! Alas!
Matilda's hopes were but the dreams of love.

FITZALAN, *recovering himself.*

Matilda's hopes are glorious certainties.

I am no maniac. Father, let me gaze
Upon thy well-known features. Twenty years
Have scarcely changed thy frame.

ANSELM.

For vigorous age
My thanks are due to Heaven and temperance.
Yet, brave Fitzalan, pardon my amazement
That you accost me thus.

FITZALAN.

From youth you were not
A hooded churchman.

ANSELM.

In earl Edmund's days
I was his 'squire at arms.

FITZALAN.

Your name was Albert.

ANSELM.

True, sir: my martial fame died with my master.
Could I bear arms in cruel Rodolph's wars?
Impossible! I took the cowl, yet oft
For dear Alicia's sake I brave the scorn

Of lawless men ; intent to aid affliction,
And strengthen virtue in her arduous conflict.

FITZALAN.

You knew young Edmund ?

ANSELM.

Yes. The goodliest child
That e'er these arms embrac'd.

FITZALAN.

He died untimely.

ANSELM.

He died indeed untimely. The fair blossom
Was quickly blasted.

FITZALAN.

Died he *fairly*, Father?

ANSELM.

Strange rumours went abroad ; I dare not think—
'Twas grief enough to have my rosy darling
Ingulph'd by the remorseless element.
But to suppose a kinsman's cruel hands
Compress'd his struggling limbs, and held him down,

Deaf to the cherub's innocent complaints,
Oh 'twere too much !

[*weeps.*]

FITZALAN.

You recollect his features?

ANSELM.

Do I remember? Could another image
Erase the record of his playful smile?
'Twas Beaumont's smile, his princely mother's lineage.
He had the open brow of Arundel,
Shaded with glossy hair; but deeply scarr'd
By a fell outlaw's arrow.

[*Fitzalan throws off his Minstrel's cap.*]

Righteous Heaven !

The brow ! the scar ! Edmund ! my living lord !

EDMUND.

I am young Edmund, heir of Arundel.
Let not thy joy betray a secret trusted
To thy tried faith.

ANSELM.

My lord in his own castle
A prisoner, and unknown !—Were you not seen
Beating the eddy stream with feeble arm,
And hurried to the ocean?

EDMUND.

How I 'scap'd

False Rodolph's cruelty, 'twere long to tell thee.
 Preserv'd almost by miracle, my childhood
 Pass'd in the fisher's cot who sav'd my life;
 Till kind De Courcy took me to his castle,
 And train'd me as his daughter's future spouse.
 He only knew my story.

ANSELM.

Yet he sent you

To Palestine.

EDMUND.

My safety was his motive.

England was torn with civil broils, and Rodolph
 High in the favour of usurping Stephen.
 Soon as returning peace renew'd the hope
 That violence might yield to truth and justice,
 My friend recall'd me. How my soul rejoiced
 When I beheld the cliffs of native Britain!
 Too soon the tempest rose, and wreck'd my hopes
 On these my patrimonial lands, now seiz'd
 By my remorseless enemy.

ANSELM.

Your shipmates——

Were they all lost?

EDMUND.

One 'scap'd. My best-lov'd friend,
 Ranulph his name, clung with me to the mast
 Which drifted us on shore. A rustic dwelling
 Again reliev'd me in my utmost peril.
 Here we concerted measures of defence.
 I in a Minstrel's habit hop'd to pass
 Unheeded to De.Courcy's neighb'ring towers.
 But gallant Ranulph chose the dangerous task
 To tamper with my vassals, and diffuse
 Rumours of my existence.

ANSELM.

Noble Ranulph!

Know you of his success?

EDMUND.

I duly hail

The rising sun with one sweet roundelay
 Known to us both, and Ranulph's distant voice
 Sometimes hath answer'd in concerted terms
 Of sense obscure to others. Yesternight
 A sudden conflagration on the hills
 Confirm'd my hopes. Anselm, it was not lighted
 By thrifty husbandmen. It blaz'd the sign
 Of full revolt among my father's vassals,
 An omen of the tyrant's fall. I answer'd

With one faint lamp, hung from these grated bars,
 And the auspicious omen of my safety
 Was welcom'd by a thousand blazing brands
 That flash'd in air.

ANSELM.

Most blessed news !

EDMUND.

Yet more.

The peasant boy, my artless guide, when freed
 By kind Alicia, bore my pledge to Ranulph,
 Urging attack ; for 'mongst the menial crew
 I have discern'd abhorrence and revolt.

ANSELM.

Earl Rodolph's power, the plunder that he gains,
 Alone retains his soldiers. Faith hath left
 The mercenary band. Your birth once known,
 You will be welcom'd as a guardian angel,
 Sent to redress a nation's wrongs.

EDMUND.

My soul

Demands the glorious struggle, the hard proof
 Of fortitude and inborn nobleness.
 And ye, paternal towers, where my forefathers
 Dealt out the bread of charity to strangers,

My prison now, though your high roofs re-echo
 To my Matilda's groans, soon will I cleanse
 Your now polluted walls, and, offering here
 The victim justice claims, again restore
 Your pristine honours.

ANSELM.

Rodolph's cruel arts
 Oppos'd to maiden meekness have prevail'd.
 He knows Matilda's birth. Even now he blends
 Injurious insult with pretended love.
 Nor hath she hope, save in Alicia's kindness,
 Who bravely dares her father's rage, and vows
 To save thy plighted bride. May Heaven confirm
 That generous oath !

EDMUND.

Doubt not Alicia's faith.

ANSELM.

If I have doubts, they spring from thee.

EDMUND.

Speak plainly.

ANSELM.

Matilda is your wife. The son of Edmund
 Must ne'er be join'd to Rodolph's guilty house.

Though every female grace adorn'd the maid,
The contract would be impious; and foul shame
Degrade the recreant youth, who lightly pardon'd
A father's murder.

EDMUND.

Why this strange precaution,
Injurious to my honour and my love,
Slandrous to fair Alicia?

ANSELM.

Deem it, sir,
The mere suggestion of suspicious age,
Too provident of danger.—Hark a voice!
It is the furious Earl's.

EDMUND.

Now, *guilty* Rodolph,
Now shalt thou feel *my* daggers!

Enter RODOLPH and GEOFFREY.

RODOLPH.

Pious Anselm,
I praise your charitable offices:
But now *I* also must have privacy.

[*Exit Anselm reluctantly.*]

Your pardon, brave Fitzalan;—but I knew not
My castle held a guest of such renown.

You have endur'd much undesign'd harsh usage.
 Had I been trusted with your rank, your welcome
 Should have been noble, such as knights receive.
 You smile——

EDMUND.

I thank you from my inmost soul;
 But give me no such welcome.

RODOLPH.

Why?

EDMUND.

They tell me
 Knights have been murder'd.

RODOLPH,

Where?

EDMUND.

Not in this chamber;
 This is the Madman's haunt. You kill not madmen.

RODOLPH.

Whom have I kill'd?

EDMUND.

I'm not thy counsellor,
 But only a poor bard.

He takes his harp and sings.

Young Bertram was an only boy ;

He was his mother's darling joy ;

She sported with him in her bower ;

She clad him in a kirtle blue,

And when he slept, she lov'd to strew

His couch with many a woodland flower.

But Guiscard, like a mountain boar,

The darling from his mother tore ;

The forest echo'd with his cries :

No more his couch with flowers is spread,

The stormy deep rolls o'er his head,

And cold in ocean's bed he lies.

RODOLPH, *starting in great agitation.*

Impossible !

There could not be a Guiscard.—These are tales

Which crazy beldames round a village hearth

Gossip to trembling babes.—What was his motive ?

EDMUND.

Guiscard could tell you why he damn'd his soul ;

'Twas for a heap of gold. Such things have been.

My travels have been large, and I have seen

Most rare occurrences. Tigers eat lambs ;

And serpents, hid beneath luxuriant grass,

Will spring upon the trav'ler, who, poor fool!
Plodded right onward, nor suspected danger.

RODOLPH, *to Geoffrey.*

This must be real disease.

EDMUND.

There is a forest——
I say not where; but outlaws lurk in forests.
I pass'd it in the night; yet, strange to say,
I was not murder'd.

RODOLPH.

Oh! he knows too much.

EDMUND.

I think I was not murder'd: yet 'tis doubtful;
For strange have been my fortunes. You have often
Seen murder'd men. How look'd they when the dagger
Stood quivering in their palpitating hearts?
Look'd they as I look now?

RODOLPH.

Fiend, art thou come
To torture me before the day of count?
Bring forth the rack, and strain him on the wheel.
Till all his sinews burst.

ALICIA rushes in and kneels to Rodolph.

ALICIA.

Oh! mercy! mercy!

Mercy, my father!

RODOLPH.

Off, deceitful girl!

Leagu'd with my foes!

ALICIA.

O curse not thine own blood!

It is indeed Fitzalan there. I sinn'd:

But spare the innocent.

RODOLPH.

She faints. My child,

I do forgive thee.

ALICIA.

Do not torture him.

He is affliction's victim. Let not slander

Report you rack'd a madman. Dearest father,

Even for thy own good name, for thy soul's peace,

Shed not the blood of innocence, but spare him.

RODOLPH.

Take hence that instrument of death. Poor wretch!

He shall be kindly treated.

EDMUND.

Traitors, hence !

Move not my throne, my awful seat of justice.
 Here royally I sat, impleaded crimes,
 And taught the rabid wolf to howl for pardon.

RODOLPH.

Frantic indeed ! I was to blame, my child ;
 Such treatment had been horrid. Cease to tremble ;
 Embrace me : I forgive thy former fault.
 Come, thou shalt plead for me to fair Matilda.
 Her beauty, strange to say, hath fir'd my heart,
 And 'tis my will to wed her. Thou canst witness
 Her knight's estate is hopeless, and already
 Have I with martial frankness urg'd my passion.
 Why should delay ensue ? This very night
 Shall holy Anselm bless our mutual vows.

ALICIA.

Has poor Alicia lost her father's love ?

RODOLPH.

No : thou shalt share my heart with sweet De Courcy.
 We shall have halcyon days. No more of war ;
 My foes are all subdu'd. The sounding drum,
 The horn, the fife, death's shrill-ton'd instruments,

No more shall echo here. My autumn years
 Shall gently wither in the arms of beauty;
 While young Matilda, mistress of my fortunes,
 Shall make these walls reverberate with mirth,
 With festival and maskings.

[*During the preceding speeches, Rodolph continues
 to observe Edmund, and Alicia makes signs to
 him to be calm.*]

EDMUND, *with great emotion.*

Aye; and vengeance
 Shall lead the mask of death.

ALICIA.

Ah! see, our presence
 Does but increase his phrensy. Let us leave him.

RODOLPH.

'Twould be discourteous. He's a knight, my child.
 Suppose I bid him to the nuptial feast?
 Couldst thou be calm, Fitzalan? Couldst thou bear
 To see the blushing maid, whom thy hard fortunes
 Have sever'd from thee, plight her marriage oath
 To the too happy Rodolph? Could I hope
 Thy native nobleness would check the fury
 Of thy most sore disease, thou shouldst be welcome

To every hospitable rite, and live
My guest most honour'd; only do not harm
My fair possessions.

EDMUND.

No; I'll guard them for thee.
Mark, while I note thy rightful goods:—A shroud.
Thou shalt not lack one, nor a coffin: no,
Nor yet a grave. What more? A passing-bell,
Tapers, and priests, and chanted hymns. With
Rodolph
I'll be most frank. These are thy proper chattels,
And only these.

RODOLPH.

Whose then is Arundel?

EDMUND.

The spirit of a drowned boy shall rise——

[Rodolph turns away in an agony.]

Nay, hear me—'twas a speech I learn'd in Syria.
We play'd an interlude at Ascalon:
I took the angel's part; I snatch'd the infant
From the swift stream when dying, and I bore it
Far towards the wilderness.

GEOFFREY, *apart to Rodolph.*

For shame, my lord!

How you betray yourself!

RODOLPH.

Is he not mad?

GEOFFREY.

Aye, as the howling storm.

RODOLPH.

Mad!—Why, 'tis well—

He must be mad, or I most curs'd.—Hence, girl!

Observing Alicia in great distress.

Art thou a spy upon thy friendless father?

ALICIA.

Break, break at once, o'erloaded heart, and leave

Thy dire inheritance of guilt and woe!

O for a shelter from life's pelting storm!

A calm dismissal to the peaceful grave,

Where e'en my father's curse could not pursue me!

RODOLPH, *embracing her.*

Forgive my desperation.

ALICIA.

Oh! my lord!

Heaven must pronounce that word; not your poor
child,

The partner of your griefs. Here let us kneel;

Here humbly ask the boon repentance craves ;
Here with most meek contrition——

RODOLPH.

'Twill not be——

A threat'ning cherub stands 'twixt me and grace,
And shrieks perdition in my frightened ears.

Enter ANSELM.

ANSELM.

I come a sad petitioner from one
Unus'd to sue. De Courcy's funeral rites
Are all prepar'd, and his sad daughter claims
Permission to attend the honour'd relics ;
To see them laid in the cold aisle, where sleep
My brothers of the convent, and to take
Her last farewell.

RODOLPH.

A plot—an impious plot——

A scheme to rob me of my precious prize.
Art thou deceiv'd, sagacious Friar ? or leagues
Thy cheating sanctity against thy master ?
Traitors, I'll frustrate all your machinations.
Haste, Geoffrey—help there—bar the postern ! Slaves,
I'll hew him down who lets her 'scape——

[Exeunt with Geoffrey.]

[*Edmund draws a dagger, and attempts to follow him. Anselm interposes.*]

ANSELM.

Forbear !

Risk not thy life, dear heir of Arundel :

This once I'll guard Matilda.

[*Exit Anselm.*]

ALICIA.

Did I hear

Arigh? The heir of Arundel—the boy
Sav'd from the greedy waves? 'Tis he ! 'tis Edmund.
Heavn, thou hast heard me, and his guiltless life
Is not requir'd from much-offending Rodolph.

EDMUND.

If thou hast pity, hasten and assist
Matilda's flight.

ALICIA.

If I have pity, saidst thou?

I've more than feeble pity,—I have *justice*.

O great avenger of thy murder'd sire,

Heir to this earldom, foe of Rodolph, hear me !

I mean to rescue thee. But first kneel down,

Swear by thy knighthood, by thy soul's best hopes,

In spite of keen remembrance of thy wrongs ;

When thou art arm'd with power, swear to respect
My father's life.

EDMUND.

The murderous Rodolph?

ALICIA.

Aye.

Stain'd with a thousand crimes, yet still my father,
Permit him to repent, and save a soul.

EDMUND.

Thou hast subdu'd me. Filial saint, I swear:
And Heaven so prosper Edmund, as he guards
The life of Rodolph!

ALICIA.

On thy instant flight
Thy life depends. I've search'd each dark recess
Within these walls, unknown to others. Mark;
[*She cautiously removes a part of the scene.*
This pannel opens: take this lamp, and hasten
Through yon straight passage: at the end observe
A massy door, commanded by this key,
'Twill open on a dungeon. Be not fearful.
The path is narrow; but it soon will lead thee
Along a steep ascent, and thou shalt issue
From thy damp covert, in a thorny brake,

Near where those elms embower the monast'ry
 Within whose cemetery good De Courcy
 Will soon be laid in peace.

EDMUND.

But my Matilda——

ALICIA.

Trust me, most faithful lover, thy Matilda
 Shalt meet thee there. When Heaven hath crown'd
 your loves ;

When your fair offspring, heir to all your fortunes,
 Heir to your virtues too, shall rise around you,
 Remember then——

EDMUND.

What wouldst thou, generous maid ?

ALICIA.

Long ere that time, the gnawing worm will prey
 On this cold heart. But promise to remember
 The maid, who suffer'd for her father's crimes ;
 And let thy lady yearly o'er my grave
 Suspend a chaplet ; while thy manly breast
 Heaves with the sigh of friendship. Fare thee well !

*[Exit Edmund through the aperture. Alicia looks
 after him.]*

ALICIA, *alone.*

Should the lamp fail, he'll wander through the cavern
A prey to morbid damps. What if I guide him?
No: that were certain ruin, should the Earl
Return and miss his prey. O righteous Heaven,
Be not extreme to mark the deeds of man,
Since error taints the fairest!

[*A scream without.*] Was that Edmund?
His distant lamp moves swiftly on.—Matilda!

Enter MATILDA in disorder. Alicia closes the aperture.

MATILDA.

Is there no safe asylum in this castle?
No dark forgotten cell, where misery
May be preserv'd from cruel Rodolph? Hah!
Fitzalan's harp! This must be his abode.
Blest chance, which taught me in the hour of danger
To find my best protector! Let me pause—
Should Rodolph follow, could a single arm
Confront a host? Alas! too sure destruction
Would overwhelm us. Shall I then return?
Return, to whom? [*Seeing Alicia.*]

Alicia—art thou here?

O shield me, generous friend! Thy father's hate
Pursues the helpless dead.

ALICIA.

I've look'd my last
On what I most ador'd. Do not reproach me.

MATILDA.

Reproach thee, sympathising excellence,
When thy heart bleeds for me?—Couldst thou believe
De Courcy's honour'd dust is now denied
A grave, and doom'd, an unresisting spoil,
To hungry bloodhounds?

ALICIA.

'Twas the threat of passion;
Regard it not.

MATILDA.

No; 'twas *concerted* wrong:
He hopes to urge me to a loath'd alliance.
Save me, Alicia, from earl Rodolph's arms.
This plighted hand must ne'er be his.

ALICIA.

It must not.
These towers would tremble at the guilty contract.

MATILDA.

I'll sooner perish.

ALICIA.

Live, Matilda, live!

The consort of a noble youth, the mistress
Of spacious Arundel. I've much to tell thee,
Tidings to thee replete with happy hopes,
To me the harbingers of lasting woe.

MATILDA.

Then will I spurn away the prosperous fortune
That blasts Alicia's joys.

ALICIA.

Can the tree flourish
When water'd by the blood of innocence?
Nó: all its fruit must fall.

MATILDA.

Shall virtue fear?

ALICIA.

My course is indirect: I dread to venture,
Yet see no safe alterative. Matilda,
Canst thou, to speed the hopes of faithful love,
To save a father's honour'd corse from insult,—
Canst thou, for generous purposes, affect
The hypocrite's vile arts; appear inconstant;

And, seeming to deplore Fitzalan's phrensy,
Hold out false hopes to Rodolph?

ATTENDANT, *without*.

This way, sir,

The lady pass'd.

MATILDA.

Oh! agony, thy father!

ALICIA.

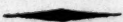
He must not search this chamber. Haste, Matilda,
And meet earl Rodolph firmly. Canst thou trust me?

MATILDA, *embracing Alicia*.

Yes; with my life, my honour, and my love. [*Exeunt*.]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.



SCENE

A field. The castle in perspective on one side, on the other a wood. A monastery and cemetery in the back ground.

RANULPH and KENRIC appear reconnoitring.

RANULPH.

No, Kenric, my opinion widely differs;
The fort is weakest on the eastern side;
Twere fitter there to assault.

KENRIC.

I grant it, Ranulph.
But let that relic of De Courcy's power,
The weak, dishearten'd band who lately join'd us,
Make on the western gate a feign'd attack.
The enemy will doubly man that turret,
And leave the east expos'd.

RANULPH.

A prudent feint.

Is every pass secur'd?

KENRIC.

All firmly guarded:

The sentinels are station'd, and the troops
Rest on their arms till evening closes.

RANULPH.

Rodolph

Holds revelry among his men at arms,
And feasts away the hours. He smote De Courcy
Ere the wax cool'd that witness'd their alliance.
He too may find the day of confidence
The harbinger of death.

KENRIC.

Yet tell me, Ranulph,

When will this heir of Arundel appear;
This scion cut from Edmund's bleeding stem,
Whom kind De Courcy foster'd? Your dark hints,
Your quick evasions when we strongly urge you,
Awake my doubts and terrors. Lives the boy?
Or is the story of his strange escape
Fram'd to amuse the vulgar mind with hopes
Transient as sunshine in December's frost?

RANULPH.

He lives, dear Kenric: let that thought content thee
To publish where, might risk his precious safety.

KENRIC.

Is it indeed a purchas'd slave, a spy,
Who from that eastern tower last night hung forth
His solitary lamp?

Enter an Officer.

OFFICER.

Ranulph, we've taken

A prisoner.

RANULPH.

Whom?

OFFICER.

A minstrel by his garb,
But by his deeds a sorcerer.

KENRIC.

Speak to the purpose.

OFFICER.

He rose out of the ground. Aye, you may smile.
'Tis truth: I did not dream: I stood on duty
When the earth heav'd beneath my feet, and groan'd
As with strange travail: a wide chasm open'd:

Forth burst the monster, and came stalking towards me.
I cross'd myself, and cried "Or man or dæmon,
"Stand, or I'll slay thee."

RANULPH.

Most magnanimous!
Where is this earth-born fiend?

OFFICER.

I left him safe
In Osbert's care. In truth, he seems most harmless.
He asks for Ranulph.

RANULPH.

What?

OFFICER.

Be cautious, knight:
For all his courteous manners, I suspect
He is a wizard sent by crafty Rodolph
To change us into men of stone.

RANULPH.

Away,—
And bring the prisoner.

*[Edmund appears advancing from the bottom of
the stage.]*

Hah! that well-known air!—
Edmund, my friend, my lord!

EDMUND.

Yes, faithful Ranulph!
Though late, I come to share thy glorious toils,
To shine in arms, first of the gallant host
Rous'd by thy zeal to punish usurpation.

RANULPH.

Now, Kenric, see thy master's son.

KENRIC.

His son!
His image, nay himself! Thou need'st no voucher,
Great heir of Arundel! there's not a line
In all thy face which does not speak thy credence.
My vital blood shed freely in thy cause,
If needful, shall attest my faith.

EDMUND.

Thanks, Kenric.
Do none but friends compose this goodly circle?
[*Observing the Soldiers who entered while Kenric spoke.*]

RANULPH.

These are but *few*, of the determin'd bands
Whom you will lead to glory. Part are lodg'd

Within that wood : the rest remain conceal'd
 By Arun's willow-crowned banks. We muster
 Five hundred knights and 'squires; of faithful yeomen
 Treble that number. All are arm'd with bows,
 Or pond'rous battle-axes. Even to-night
 We meditate attack.

EDMUND, *to the troops.*

Hail, gallant friends !
 Henceforth associates of your master's fortunes.
 I hail you, righteous instruments, selected
 To rid the land of tyrants. See, your chief,
 Your lineal Baron, born your friend and patron,
 Trusts to your firmness his paternal rights,
 His dearer love, and dearest honour. Friends,
 See you those towers? There unoffending virtue,
 In fair De Courcy's form, to you extends
 Her captive arms, and asks your aid.

SOLDIERS.

We'll save her.

Other voices.

We'll fight thy battles, till we die or conquer.

EDMUND.

I breathe the blessed air of liberty ;
 My tongue now utters what my full heart prompts ;

No more I tremble at the frown of man,
 Or crouch in base concealment. Off, vile habit!
 Bring me a lance, a shield, a habergeon,
 Such as my comrades in the battle use;
 Not the rich mail, or radiant helmet starr'd
 With golden studs: my father's costly suit
 Rusts in a murderer's armoury. Say, friends,
 Shall we not snatch it thence?

ALL.

Lead on.

EDMUND.

Sweet music!

Most welcome to a soldier's ear. Brave Ranulph,
 Help to equip thy friend.

[Exeunt Edmund and Ranulph.]

First OFFICER.

Now by the rood

'Tis a most princely youth!

Second OFFICER.

I knew him well

In our good Baron's castle.

Third OFFICER.

Great De Courcy
Esteem'd him as his son : a nobler stripling
Ne'er trod on Christian ground.

KENRIC.

Each to your post ;
There wait till curfew tolls.
[*Exeunt Soldiers, &c.*

Enter a Sentinel to KENRIC.

SENTINEL.

The motley group
Which issued from the castle shape their course
On towards the cemetery. We discern
Priests in their robes pontifical, a band
Of choristers, a sable-vested bier,
And following mourners. Have they leave to pass?

KENRIC.

To pass, but not return. See that no straggler
Inform earl Rodolph of our martial port.
And we shall reverence fall'n mortality,
And give to grief observance.

[*The funeral of De Courcy passes over the stage : priests
and choristers precede the bier, mourners follow.*]

Choristers sing.

Distant from his native walls
Great de Courcy fights, and falls:
Vanquish'd by superior powers,
He dies in Rodolph's hostile towers:
Strangers shall adorn the grave
Of him who only fought to save.

Close by the sepulchral stone
Stands the lance with rust o'ergrown:
Now no more in honour's field
Shall we mark the warrior's shield;
But virtue's holy tear shall lave
Good De Courcy's sacred grave.

[*Re-enter EDMUND armed, while the dirge is
chanted. He views the procession, and then accosts
a priest:*]

EDMUND.

Fear not, father:
Your pious offices require protection.
Said I *protection*? 'Tis too cold a term;
Affection, duty, gratitude and love,
All claim my sorrows here. Is not yon fair one,
Whose flowing veil conceals her graceful form,
The Baron's only daughter?

PRIEST.

No, sir knight.

Rodolph denied that privilege: Alicia,
 Our pious mistress, of her charity
 Supplies Matilda's place, and weeps the fate
 Of transitory greatness.

EDMUND.

But Matilda——

Where is Matilda?

PRIEST.

Closeted with Anselm,
 Who now absolves her from her former vows
 Given to the Maniac.

EDMUND.

You but mock me, Priest:

Wherefore dissolve that bond?

PRIEST.

Tomorrow's sun
 Sees her earl Rodolph's bride. This solemn rite
 Rewards her acquiescence with his wishes.
 Our castle sounds with nuptial preparation.

EDMUND.

Pass on: regard not me——

RANULPH.

This silly tale
Is forg'd by weak credulity, or malice.

EDMUND.

To doubt her faith were impious. Yet, what insults
May cruelty inflict on helpless beauty
Ere we can march to save her!....False Alicia!
Was it thy feint, thy most dishonest fraud,
To lure from a weak maid her only guardian,
And, cheating him with sanctimonious oaths,
To quit the destitute?....Now, prudent Anselm,
I see the motive of thy fears.....To arms—
I'll thunder at the castle gates this instant.

*[As the procession passes, Matilda sees Edmund,
and gives a sign to a Priest to detain him.]*

PRIEST.

Sir knight, that lady craves one word.

EDMUND.

Alicia !

Time is too precious now for vain contention.
Where is thy promise that my love should meet me
Here, where these elms embower the cemetery?
That oath be on thy soul !

MATILDA.

Give me one moment.

*[She follows him to the front of the stage, and then
lifts up her veil.]*

Edmund, my plighted lord !

EDMUND.

My soul's best treasure !

Unutterable, unexpected joy !

MATILDA.

I lov'd thee, Edmund, when Fitzalan's name
Belied thy noble birth. In Rodolph's towers,
Mid danger and distress, my faith was firm ;
Unmov'd by terror, proof to the disguise
Of thy affected phrensy. But henceforth
Must kind Alicia, who like me attir'd
Confronts my perils, share the grateful heart
Which once was wholly thine.

EDMUND.

I wrong'd her virtue :

But I had launch'd my fortunes in one bark,
And fear'd its shipwreck.

[The troops pass over the stage.]

See, lov'd maid, the bands

Of Arundel and justice ! honest souls,
 Who pin'd in low obscurity, nor shar'd
 The guilt of usurpation. Hail them, lady ;
 For these thy maids in peaceful bowers shall weave
 The scarf of triumph.

MATILDA *addresses the Soldiers.*

I salute you, worthies ;
 You, who sustain Heaven's delegated sword,
 Who war to smite offenders. Go, protect
 Your fields from violence, your hearths from insult.
 Bid hospitality, in those fair seats
 By riot long profan'd, resume her rights,
 And spread her feast to sorrow. By your conquests
 Shall desolation cease ; alike unseen
 The robber chief and trembling fugitive.
 Then shall the time-worn veteran safely press
 The pillow of repose ; no orphan then
 Shall thus lament a basely-murder'd father.

[She bends over the bier.]

RANULPH.

We will avenge him, lady.

EDMUND.

Yet, remember,
 Edmund with Rodolph must contend. Avoid

The furious Earl : my sword demands that victim.

Hark ! 'tis the welcome curfew. [Curfew tolls.

KENRIC.

Hear it, tyrant !

For 'tis thy knell of death.

MATILDA.

Edmund, farewell.

Thy plighted love, the orphan maid, whose life

Hangs on thy safety, in yon holy walls

Trembling awaits the issue of this contest.

May every dart fall harmless, every sword

Turn blunted from thy heav'n-defended bosom !

[*Matilda and the funeral pass to the monastery.*

Edmund and his Soldiers march towards the castle.]

SCENE changes to another part of the castle. RODOLPH is discovered in a pensive posture, with attendants.

ATTENDANT.

Shall we have interludes, my noble lord ?

RODOLPH.

Aye ; interludes and tournaments and maskings

Dances and revelry and rare devices

All that can gladden the dull eye of care,
 And sooth distemper'd thought. Leave me. Tomorrow
 Shall hoary Rodolph, in the silken vestment
 Of a gay youthful bridegroom, play the antic;
 Deck'd with love's trophies, a mere gaze for boys.
 What if tomorrow's sun rise not on Rodolph?
 What if the Maniac's threats—

Enter GEOFFREY.

RODOLPH.

Sir Seneschal,
 These nuptials promise shame, reproach, and discord;
 It may be, murder.

GEOFFREY.

Countermand your orders;
 Endow Fitzalan in your fairest lands;
 Let him espouse the heiress of De Courcy,—
 While your Alicia waits, his wanton handmaid.

RODOLPH.

Why name Fitzalan? Why asperse my daughter?
 Art thou distraught, like that unhappy pris'ner?

GEOFFREY.

I mean, my lord, the knight is not distraught;
 Nor is he now your pris'ner. Fair Alicia,

Your darling child, by shameless love transported,
 Has freed him, and, forgetful of her birth,
 Engrafts her fate on an adventurous stem.
 Sir, she hath left the bones of old De Courcy
 To find a grave, and join'd her paramour.
 From yonder heights, begirt with arm'd associates,
 He will descend at midnight, and attack
 The western gate.

RODOLPH.

This is thy coinage, carle:
 All false as hell.

GEOFFREY.

The priest who led the choir
 Beheld the lovers meet, saw their caresses,
 Heard them denounce your doom; then haply 'scaped
 To bring the news.

RODOLPH, *after a pause.*

Avenging Heav'n! I trace
 Thy visitation here. I rudely blasted
 The tender germ of Edmund's race, and now
 My offspring tears my vitals.

GEOFFREY.

Will earl Rodolph,
 The lion of the field, affect the preacher?

Shall the vile foes who seek his life, surprise
A beads-man at his prayers?

RODOLPH.

No, Sigebert! Roderic!
Call out the knights, plant archers in the fosse,
Ring out th' alarum-bell to call in stragglers,
Then bar the portals. Who will dare to hold
The lion by the beard?

- [*Sigebert, &c. enter and exeunt during this speech.*]

GEOFFREY.

Thy martial bands
Will soon repel th' assailants: but let Rodolph
Rise to a vengeance worthy of himself;
Nor let Matilda, as Fitzalan's wife,
Scorn thy dishonour'd child.

RODOLPH.

I see thy purpose;
'Tis great, 'tis glorious! Haste thee, find Matilda;
Call father Anselm—force her to the altar;
This instant I'll espouse her.

GEOFFREY.

As I pass'd
The oratory, I beheld the maid.
She knelt, her veil was down; the Friar stood by,

O'er her bent head he held the crucifix,
As giving absolution.

[A violent clamour is heard without. Rodolph starts.]

RODOLPH.

What! sedition

Among the soldiery?

Enter RODERIC in great confusion.

RODERIC.

Escape !....All's lost—

The subterraneous passage hath been forc'd:

I'll bar their entrance here.

[Roderic stations himself at one of the entrances. Enter EDMUND, RANULPH, &c. at the other. Geoffrey flies. They force Roderic to retreat. Rodolph draws his sword, and rushes upon Edmund, who disarms him.]

RODOLPH.

This is a worthy deed, Sir Lunatic.

Villain, slave, minstrel, base seducer, minion

Of a rebellious girl!

EDMUND.

Take back those taunts:

They suit not me.

RODOLPH.

Forgo the 'vantage, then,

Which my false daughter gave thee. Let us meet

In open field, as knight contends with knight,
Nor basely steal my castle.

EDMUND.

Can he steal
Who takes his own? Seest thou this jewel, Rodolph?
Mark! 'tis the crest of Arundel that flames
Above the golden cross. I wore the relic
On the same morning when thy cruel arms
Plung'd me in Arun's wave.

[Rodolph falls upon the ground.]

RANULPH.

Usurper! Tyrant!
Robber! take back thy taunts. Young Edmund lives!
Such ever be their meed, whom lust of power
Impels to deeds like thine!

EDMUND.

Forbear. His pangs
Must move our sympathy. Assist to raise him.
*[While they are raising Rodolph, Alicia rushes in,
and throws herself at Edmund's feet.]*

ALICIA.

Thy oath, O Edmund! recollect thy oath.

RODOLPH.

Thou shalt not triumph here. This to the heart
Of thy Matilda.

[*Rodolph bursts from Ranulph, and, not seeing Alicia's face, stabs her. ANSELM enters, and supports her.*]

ANSELM.

He hath stabb'd his daughter.

Dost thou live, lady?

ALICIA.

It hath struck my heart.

Look to the wretched man. Restrain his phrensy;

Say I forgive.....He meant not *this* for me.

[*Pulling out the dagger.*]

EDMUND, *supporting Alicia.*

Dear generous maid! Is this the hard return

Of thy unequal'd worth?

ALICIA.

Dost thou lament me?

Thy voice is sweetest music to my ears;

Thy safety my first wish. I lov'd thee, chief:

Mine was no common passion; but just Heaven

Decreed thee to *Matilda*.

RODOLPH, *struggling with those who hold him.*

Give me room!

Where should she die but in her father's arms?

Shall Edmund's son support her? Has she curs'd me?

EDMUND.

Guard that unhappy wretch, lest he disturb
The parting angel.

ALICIA.

Weep not, noble Edmund.

I had no hope in life, and poor Alicia
A willing victim dies for thy Matilda.
I have had visions of thy future bliss:
Thy nuptials shall be crown'd with length of days,
Domestic happiness, and numerous issue.
Thy children's children shall possess these towers.
I faint. Ah! see Heaven hath reveng'd thy wrongs
On my poor father. [Dies.

EDMUND, *after a pause.*

Yes, most wretched Rodolph,
I pity thee, and pardon all.

RODOLPH.

What pardon?

Look there. [pointing to Alicia.]

Can mercy veil that damning act?
O slaughter'd girl! thy most unnatural father
Atones his crime.

[Offers to kill himself, but is prevented.]

EDMUND.

Anselm, he is thy care.

Console him, if thou canst.

Enter KENRIC.

KENRIC.

All have surrender'd.

Roderic long fought; but when he knew your title,
 He flung his sword indignant at my feet,
 And cried he was a rebel. Geoffrey fell
 Among the carnage.

EDMUND.

Let my father's standard
 Wave on my native towers. Let truth and justice
 Visit their old abode, and misery bless
 The name of Arundel. For this fair corse,
 All the frail honours mortals can bestow
 Shall grace her memory, and record her worth.

[Exeunt omnes.]

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

POEMS.

VOL. III.

G

POEMS

POEMS.

ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE EDMUND BURKE.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1797.

At last,
Of middle age one rising, eminent
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth and peace,
And judgement from above.

MILTON.

WHAT mighty spirit, in the dark abode
Of earth long prison'd, gains its wish'd release?
Who journeys now along the starry road
To claim the birth-right of eternal peace?

No vulgar grief these decent rites bespeak,
No pageant woe attends this solemn bier;
Unfeign'd affection bathes each mourner's cheek,
And love and reverence consecrate the tear.

To grace thine obsequies, lamented shade !
 Aerial forms from sapphire clouds emerge,
 Cherubic hands the cypress garlands braid,
 And harps of seraphs hymn thy funeral dirge.

Genius, with folded arms and wings deprest,
 Deplores the mind that caught his brightest flame;
 And British Freedom rends her matron vest,
 Mourning the champion of her injur'd fame.

Reft of his purple robe and floating plume,
 Sad Chivalry attends with scutcheon torn;
 He plants with deathless palms the hallow'd tomb,
 To shield thy dust from Vandals yet-unborn.

Thine are these obsequies, O BURKE!—to thee
 Rites so appropriate can alone belong:
 O long perturbed spirit! art thou free
 From scenes of faction, violence, and wrong?

I hail thy sojourn in the peaceful earth.
 There rest secure, for all thy toils are o'er:
 The world's dread tempest spares departed worth,
 And Slander's poison'd darts can wound no more.

Thy silver'd head, which e'en from sacred age
 Claim'd no protection, sinks in calm repose;
 Thy bosom glows no more with generous rage,
 Nor throbs with patriot or parental woes.

Friend of thy country! friend of human kind!
 Whose lofty spirit nobly spurn'd control,
 Whose errors spoke a pure ingenuous mind,—
 Peace to thy dust, and blessings on thy soul!

Go—join the host of Britain's mighty dead,
 Review thy Wentworth mid surrounding stars,
 Hear Falkland blame the king for whom he bled,
 See Hampden blush to mention Freedom's wars.

There, where the virtuous, tho' in life disjoin'd,
 Confess the sympathy of kindred worth,
 Go—with unfading wreaths thy temples bind,
 While toil and sorrow vex the troubled earth:

For states ephemeral in every clime
 Start into birth, and shed a meteor glare;
 While spacious empires, eldest born of time,
 Hurl'd from their orbits, are dissolv'd in air.

Now maniac Anarchy, by conquest join'd,
 Fetters the nations in contention's chain,
 Deceives with sophistry the human mind,
 While her red standards hide the ravag'd plain.

Unmov'd by pity, unappall'd by shame,
 Like Asia's tiger, fell and unsubdued,
 Licence, usurping Freedom's holy name*,
 Pours on the world her black Tartarean brood.

By famine scath'd, imbrued with mortal gore,
 Man on the desolated earth falls prone;
 Sooth'd by the dreams of flattering hope no more
 His wasted tribes emit one feeble groan.

In vain commission'd from the realms of love,
 Peace with cerulean pinion cleaves the air;
 Denied a shelter for her harass'd dove,
 She seeks the sacred ark, and trembles there.

For still the tempest, which from stormy Seine
 Horrific rose, pursues its destin'd way;
 Bursts o'er th' imperial realms of Charlemagne,
 And scorns the limits of Ausonian sway:

* "Licence they mean, when they cry Liberty."

Milton's Sonnets.

From distant Elbe to Tiber's sacred head
 The wasteful ruin unresisted speeds;
 Old Tagus trembles in his golden bed,
 And Alpheus feebly lavcs Sicilia's meads.

The frighten'd ploughman quits his custom'd toil,
 The shepherd pants beneath the buckler's load
 While the foul bramble riots in the soil
 Where the vine ripen'd, and the olive glow'd.

O Italy!—where Nature, ever gay,
 Reclin'd at ease, the horn of plenty dress'd,
 Where soft Favonius wak'd the early day,
 And evening sunk on Zephyr's balmy breast:

O Italy!—where Science lov'd to rove,
 Where Genius felt his noblest powers expand,
 Where Sculpture stole Promethean warmth from Jove*,
 And bolder Painting snatch'd his plastic wand:

Now clashing arms thy shuddering Lares fright,
 From ambush'd war thy woodland Dryads fly;
 Loud cannons rend the peaceful veil of night,
 And lurid smoke obscures thine azure sky.

* Shakespeare thus accents the word Promethean:

“ I know not where is the Promethean heat,

“ That can thy light relumine.”—*Othello*.

Now o'er the Mantuan's laurell'd tomb no more
 Shall Taste reclin'd her classic dreams prolong;
 The Tuscan maid, who weeps on Anio's shore,
 Chants not the hallow'd notes of Tasso's song.

Shock'd at Democracy's destructive fires,
 The shade of Petrarch flies Avignon's gloom,
 And from the Vatican's dishonoured spires
 Sees the predicted fall of papal Rome.

Say, ruin'd Venice! shall your gilded prows,
 And silken sails, now shade your wedded sea?—
 You from barbaric slumber first arose,
 And taught admiring Europe to be free:

Yet Freedom's spurious race with insult bends
 Your stately head, and claims its naval crowns;
 While Austria from your hand the rudder rends,
 And, tir'd, reposes in your ravish'd towns.

How oft, firm Austria! did thy patient soul
 Rise from defeat, successful war to wage;
 While thy young hero* rush'd to glory's goal,
 And claim'd remembrance in her fairest page:

* The archduke Charles.

What time Danubius saw his victor car
 Chase from Bohemia's hills th' invading band;
 When veterans, hoary in the ranks of war,
 Resign'd the truncheon to his abler hand !

The hero turns—for through Carinthia's wastes
 Bellona sounds her long unheard alarm;
 The Stirian peasant to the mountain hastes,
 And weeps the ruin of his peaceful farm.

See, where, obedient to the call of woe,
 The patriot chief protects his native coast;
 While, rich with Roman spoils, his mighty foe
 Leads from Eridanus his conquering host !

What high authorities, what sanction'd ties,
 Await, brave Austrian ! thy decisive sword !—
 Shall the true sun of Liberty arise?
 Shall Truth and Reason own their rights restor'd ?

Ah, no ! the Sovereign Ruler will not deign
 To check with mercy the commission'd rod;
 Man has not yet expung'd his guilty stain,
 Nor, by affliction taught, confess'd a God.

For, from his sapphire throne the Eternal Sire
 Beheld Religion from her altars driven;
 While Infidelity defied his ire,
 And proudly rear'd her horrent front to heaven.

He mark'd the fury's unresisted rage
 Blast fair creation with pestiferous breath,
 Tear the last comfort from enfeebled age,
 And dash the chalice from the lip of death.

He heard the cries of injur'd Justice, tir'd
 Of wrongs from mortals of Titanian birth;
 While kings, seduc'd by sordid views, conspir'd
 To chase their best protector from the earth.

Alike incens'd, he saw the Polacs * bleed,
 Quenching with tides of slaughter Praga's flame;
 And Gallic dæmons to the scaffold lead
 The royal victim of his people's shame.

Father of righteousness! didst thou survey
 Confederate powers, in Honour's fair disguise,
 Mark out distracted France their destin'd prey,
 And to themselves allot the sacrifice?

* "He smote the sledged Polac on the ice."—*Hamlet*.

Fountain of truth and goodness ! didst thou hear
 Democracy to faith and right aspire,
 While Lyons sunk beneath her murd'rous spear,
 And horror shriek'd along the banks of Loire ?

Yes, thou wert witness ! thy almighty hand
 Gave to Leviathan resistless power ;
 Thou said'st—" Arise, O sword ! to smite the land,"—
 And Slaughter rages its permitted hour.

Thus when, of old, from Judah's rebel coast
 The cries of guilt o'erpower'd enduring Grace,
 Thy angel summon'd the Chaldæan host,
 And Pagans triumph'd o'er the chosen race.

Self-glorying in his might, the victor trod
 O'er prostrate Solyma's defenceless wall :
 " Vain man ! exalted by an angry God
 " To punish guilty man, thou too shalt fall.

" 'Tis not on thee the beams of favour shine,
 " Soon shall thy proud supremacy be o'er ;
 " The Persian views thee with an eye malign,
 " And Babylon shall sink, to rise no more."

Such was the patriot prophet's closing strain,
 From Egypt's wastes the holy exile* cried ;
 He warn'd his country, but he warn'd in vain,—
 He told the ruin of her foes,—and died.

For him, the martyr'd seer†, whose harp divine
 In deathless numbers Salem's woes deplor'd,
 The royal virgins of Josiah's line
 In Taphnes' lofty towers their dirges pour'd.

Like them, ye British maidens ! let the lyre
 With glowing warmth your BURKE's renown emblaze ;
 Revere the semblance of prophetic fire,
 And give the patriot fall'n a patriot's praise.

His zealous hands a spacious temple rais'd,
 Sacred to Liberty of British birth ;
 Around the altar of the goddess blaz'd
 The splendid trophies of her antient worth.

* Jeremiah.

† St. Jerome relates, from an antient tradition, that Jeremiah was stoned to death by the Jews, at Tahpanhes, for preaching against their idolatry.—Tahpanhes, or Taphnes, was one of the principal cities of Egypt.

He view'd with fond idolatry the shrine,
 And threaten'd each assailant to engage;
 His ported spear now menac'd Right Divine,
 Now brav'd the shafts of Democratic Rage.

E'en while that fiend, seductive, young, and gay,
 Yet pure from slaughter, first withstood the laws,
 He told the horrors of her future sway,
 And listed Truth in Order's sacred cause.

His warning voice, predicting future woes,
 The torpid soul of Apathy illum'd;
 No more complaining of a folded rose*,
 Voluptuous Sloth a manly port assum'd.

Daughters of Britain! let the grateful tear
 Of kindred worth your champion's ashes dew:
 His breast, like yours, impassion'd and sincere,
 Glow'd with the virtues he rever'd in you.

Like you, he sorrow'd for a noble train,
 Once the bright gems that grac'd the Gallic throne,
 Now scorn'd and slander'd by the base and vain,
 Chas'd from all countries, and proscrib'd their own.

* Alluding to the story of the Sybarite, who complained that he could not sleep, because the rose-leaves lay doubled under him.

Mourn him, ye Muses! for he well could trace
 Your radiant visions to their hallow'd source;
 He knew to mingle every Attic grace
 With Roman freedom, dignity and force.

Who now shall bid the bold impassion'd strain
 Of manly eloquence each heart inspire?
 Who now in Britain shall awake again
 A Tully's pathos, and a Tully's fire?

Like him, the British patriot's spirit soar'd
 Above the specious Cæsar of the day*;
 Whilst in the idol by the crowd ador'd
 He view'd Ambition panting for his prey.

With ardour such as once the Forum saw,
 Ere Roman Freedom at Philippi bled,
 He urg'd the violated rights of Law,
 And in her cause invok'd her sages dead.

Nor did Arpinum's hills, or Antium's grove,
 Where private virtue prompted deathless deeds,
 Glow with the radiance of domestic love,
 More pure than Beaconsfield's enamell'd meads.

* The Roman populace, being deceived by Cæsar's pretensions to patriotism, espoused his party; but Cicero discovered his ambitious designs.

There the firm friend, the husband ever kind,
 Indulg'd the sympathies to nature dear;
 There the fond father to the grave resign'd
 His only hope, and sunk upon his bier :

For, to the sadness of parental woes
 Did public sorrow added gloom impart;
 Dark and more dark the pensive future rose,
 Till dire forebodings burst his generous heart.

O worthy purer times, and happier days,
 When virtue triumph'd in its best reward,
 Ere sordid interest quench'd the love of praise,
 Or party sanction'd what the soul abhorr'd !

And ye, keen spirits ! who delight to scan
 The obvious fault, to latent merit blind,
 Respect the failings of imperfect man,
 And spare the weakness of a mighty mind.

Lo ! Party drops her vizard at his grave,
 Reviving Friendship owns her former power,
 And, as she weeps the learn'd, the good, the brave,
 Forgets the petty conflicts of the hour.

While those pure souls, to whose enraptur'd gaze
 Philosophy her starry roll hath giv'n,
 (Not the false fiend, whose meteor lamp betrays,
 But she that opes the golden gates of heaven)—

While those pure souls, who, teaching truths divine,
 Religious faith with human knowledge blend,
 The dust, in pious hope, to dust resign,
 And, at his Maker's summons, yield their friend :

" Now," they exclaim, " beyond the bounds of time
 " His soul reposes in eternal joy,
 " Sees the clear vision of the great Sublime,
 " And tastes the Beautiful without alloy.

" In realms where Truth and Righteousness preside,
 " Where Mercy shines with lustre unprofan'd,
 " He sees Omnipotence the balance guide,
 " And human passions work the end ordain'd :

" He sees events announce a distant cause,
 " Great in the sight of God, to man unseen ;
 " Beholds unerring order's sacred laws
 " Direct the movements of the vast machine.

" Now, with cherubic intellect inform'd,
" His mind expatiates o'er a boundless store ;
" Now the pure zeal, that once the patriot warm'd,
" Bids the rapt seraph kindle and adore *."

* " The rapt seraph that adores and burns."—*Pope*.

ZEPHYRUS AND MAY.

With dalliance rude young Zephyr woo's
Coy May.—

WARTON.

CHARM'D by young Zephyr's manly bloom,
See May her festal wreath assume ;
She decks it with a thousand fancies,
Woodland lilies, purple pansies,
With hyacinth, Apollo's joy ;
With narcissus, self-lov'd boy,
And anemone's rich hue,
Which at Cypria's bidding grew
Profusely on the Syrian plain,
Shadowing young Adonis slain ;
Flower of love ! with colours gay
Now it decks the crown of May.
Loosely falls the virgin's hair,
Mantling o'er her shoulders fair :
Thus from lofty trees and bowers
Hang the woodbine's pensile flowers.
Lo the goddess o'er the plain
Sweeps her dew-impearled train ;

In her dazzling eye-balls shine
 Symbols of her birth divine;
 Such the blaze of Cynthia's car,
 Or mild Evening's radiant star.
 Where'er she moves, the Sylphs around
 In playful troops exulting bound.
 There Love, a rosy artless boy,
 Tips his darts with hope and joy,
 While the ever-laughing Pleasures
 Frolic to Idalian measures;
 And Innocence with sportive look
 Plucks a ribband from her crook,
 And, softly stealing, by surprise
 Slips the noose o'er Cupid's eyes:
 Now she stands his spleen deriding,
 Till her mistress gently chiding
 Sends her wandering o'er the plains,
 To summon all the nymphs and swains,
 From woodland dell or meadow green,
 To the bridals of their queen.

For yielding Juno bids prepare
 The nuptials of the lovely pair,
 And guides her peacocks to the isles
 Where eternal summer smiles:
 There, where Alcides slew the dragon,
 She quits her star-bestudded waggon,

And, while her birds their plumes compose,
 Through pomegranate bowers she goes,
 Where beneath the spiral leaves
 Youthful Zephyr she perceives
 Guarding Flora's tender shoots
 And Pomona's ripening fruits.
 His subject breezes round him play,
 And cool the glowing orb of day;
 Clos'd are his rainbow-painted wings,
 While of his promis'd May he sings;
 Gay Cupids bind in artful braid
 The ringlets which his forehead shade,
 Those perfum'd ringlets, which exhale
 The sweets of Araby's blest vale!

Juno thus salutes the lover :

" Rise ! for winter's rage is over :
 " Nature now, in vigour full,
 " Scorns the empire of the Bull ;
 " No more his starry horns shall spurn
 " Fair Plenty and her golden urn,
 " Nor, while enrag'd he swings his tail,
 " Shall Eurus shower the sleety hail :
 " Behold ! along the ecliptic road
 " The ethereal Twins the recreant goad,
 " And to the zenith swift convey
 " The flaming chariot of the day :

" While Philomela, dumb too long,
 " Mid flowering hawthorn chants her song.
 " That song thy nuptial hymn shall prove,
 " Soon shalt thou see thy plighted love :
 " Even now she comes, by Hymen led,
 " His torch high flaming o'er her head ;
 " Soon shall thy raptur'd eyes behold
 " That beauty of celestial mould :
 " Soon shalt thou see the blush, which vies
 " With morning kindling in the skies,
 " And catch the melting smiles, which speak
 " Faithful love and transport meek.
 " Ah ! not so the virgin smil'd
 " When Boreas, with hot passion wild,
 " Scornful of her former vows,
 " Claim'd the beauty for his spouse.
 " I threaten'd : but the rebel power
 " Snatch'd her from Arcadia's bower,
 " While mixing in its peaceful sport,
 " And bore her to his Scythian court.
 " Harness'd whirlwinds swift and strong
 " Drew the cloud-hung car along ;
 " The ravisher, their speed to urge,
 " Shook the rein, and rais'd the scourge :
 " Loud shriek'd the maid, when arrowy hail
 " Rudely rent her gauzy veil,

" When her crown, with flowers emboss'd,
 " Grew stiff beneath incrusting frost ;
 " When from her ambrosial curls,
 " Loosely bound with orient pearls,
 " She felt long icicles depend
 " And o'er her shivering bosom bend ;
 " While thick fogs and vapour cold
 " Wrapp'd her in their murky fold.
 " O'er bare rocks and moss-grown mountains,
 " O'er deserts void of limpid fountains,
 " Dark with pine and sombrous yew,
 " The chariot unresisted flew,
 " Till by Neva's sullen stream
 " The God restrain'd his boisterous team,
 " And, glorying in his brutal power,
 " Show'd the fair his nuptial bower :
 " No myrtle, eglantine, or palm,
 " No plant odorous dropping balm,
 " Not e'en the daisy's circle pale
 " Blossom'd in that frigid vale,
 " Where cradled in eternal snow
 " The hardy lichens only grow :
 " There built of ice a palace shone,
 " Ice the roof, and ice the throne ;
 " Piles of ice, in ranks display'd,
 " Form'd a glittering colonnade,

" Enlighten'd by the twinkling rays
 " Of the chaste moon's humid blaze,
 " And shapes fantastic through the space
 " Gaily danc'd with antic grace :
 " Such as in Autumn's stormy reign
 " Round Boötes' starry wane,
 " And the ever-watchful Bear
 " Gambol in wide fields of air.
 " There many a gem you might have seen,
 " Once dew-drops on the vernal green,
 " Till Winter with petrific frown
 " Fix'd them trembling in her crown ;
 " That crown which deck'd the stately court
 " Where Boreas reign'd in regal port,
 " Who, weary now of Winter's gloom,
 " Seiz'd on May's enchanting bloom,
 " And bore her to his barren reign,
 " And offer'd her his vast domain,
 " In hopes her radiant smile would cheer
 " The horrors of his palace drear.
 " Vain, impious hope ! The captive fair
 " With constant love, with fixt despair,
 " For her Zephyrus lamented,
 " And the realms by him frequented,
 " Tempe's vales, and Enna's glades,
 " And those high embowering shades

“ Of Tmolus, in whose sylvan reign
“ Happy mortals, free from pain,
“ And fed from Amalthea’s horn,
“ Life’s perplexing sorrows scorn.
“ But those happy mortals wept,
“ While thy bride was captive kept :
“ Every glen and rural scene
“ Felt the anguish of their queen :
“ Then shrieks of anguish and dismay
“ From Parthenope’s warm bay,
“ From Campania olive-crown’d,
“ From rich Valdarno verse-renown’d,
“ Echo’d through the naked bowers,
“ And frighten’d all the sylvan powers :
“ Nymphs, their loose hair wildly waving,
“ Rov’d around the meadows raving ;
“ Many a swain with drooping head
“ Mourn’d his ewes by famine dead,
“ Or vainly to his fostering breast
“ His frozen lambs despairing press’d :
“ Every pipe meantime was mute,
“ Oaten reed and Dorian flute,
“ And the altars were neglected
“ By the Dryads once protected :
“ There no wreaths with flowers inwove
“ Breath’d an incense dear to Jove,

" Who, jealous of his rights withheld,
 " In vindictive wrath compell'd
 " Terra to approach the state,
 " Where in majesty he sate.
 " She came, by thankless toil oppress'd,
 " And thus the King of Heav'n address'd :
 " Eternal power ! from Saturn sprung !
 " Fate thus decreed, when Time was young,
 " When, careless of their future doom,
 " My numerous brood in childhood's bloom,
 " Their high destinies unweigh'd,
 " On the green sod careless play'd ;
 " Then Fate decreed the Northern Wind
 " Should to Winter be confin'd,
 " While Zephyrus with brooding wing
 " Was doom'd to nurse the growth of Spring,
 " Till May in beauty's prime mature
 " Should crown his vows with passion pure.—
 " Rejoic'd the high decree I heard,
 " And Heaven confirm'd what Earth rever'd.
 " Then follow'd halcyon days, while man
 " Bless'd the reign of bounteous Pan ;
 " Till in evil hour accurst,
 " Infuriate with unhallow'd lust,
 " Boreas Zephyr's rage defied,
 " And seiz'd fair May, his promis'd bride ;

" Even now in Scythian wilds she pines,
 " While Nature at her loss declines,
 " And bids her barren womb withhold
 " The produce of the plough and fold.—
 " And shall the foul invader 'scape?
 " Rise, monarch ! and avenge the rape :
 " Let Nature smile, be Fate obey'd ;
 " And give to Zephyrus the maid.
 " Saturnius yields : at his command
 " Hyperion leads the glittering band
 " Of fervid Hours ; around his car
 " The radiant squadrons form for war ;
 " From heaven's wide portals issuing forth,
 " They seek the regions of the North.
 " The king of tempests sees, afraid,
 " Their splendor pierce his gloomy shade,
 " While arrowy rays of light assail
 " The rigours of his icy mail.
 " Sharp is the conflict ; cold and heat
 " Alternate triumph and retreat ;
 " The raging storm resistless drives,
 " Furious the piercing sun-beam strives ;
 " Vanquish'd at length, a torrent falls
 " Profuse from the dissolving walls ;
 " The crystal fabric melts away,
 " And liberates the captive May,

" Who, springing to the throne of Jove,
 " Demands from him her promis'd love.
 " Heaven's monarch bends his brows divine,
 " And gives the nod which seals her thine.
 " And, lo ! even now through flowery meads
 " Hymen the plighted virgin leads ;
 " From impious rapine sav'd, her charms
 " Implore the refuge of thy arms."
 " Mine, ever mine, that matchless bloom !
 " Hear, Nature, and record the doom,
 " Th' auspicious doom !" the lover cries,
 And grasps in ecstasy the prize.
 The maid with looks of bashful beauty
 Vows the vow of love and duty,
 While Hymen o'er the faithful pair
 Waves his beaming torch in air ;
 Then Zephyr to his chariot braces
 Harness'd kids in silken traces,
 And with pinions amply spread
 He shades his consort's bending head....
 See the nuptial pomp ascending,
 Rural deities attending,
 Pan, Vertumnus, and the Fauns,
 Gods of mountains, gods of lawns,
 Pomona, and the nymphs who play
 In limpid streams or woodlands gay ;

Those, their pipes melodious blowing,
These, with vestures loosely flowing,
Scattering roses, sprinkling balms,
And waving their triumphant palms.
Nature hails the splendid throng,
And with gratulating song
Welcomes rustic joy and pleasure,
Peace and plenty without measure,
Genial years, successful toil,
Corn and honey, milk and oil;
All to these blest lovers owing,
All from their pure union flowing:
Since Zephyrus is bound to May,
The earth for ever shall be gay.

THE SPORTS OF ECHO.

Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere.

MILTON.

SHEPHERD, hist! in yonder dell
Echo winds her silver shell.
Not Terra's virgin daughter coy,
Who languish'd for the Thespian boy
Narcissus, crown'd with golden hair,
Who, of mortal race most fair,
Once wandering o'er the Muses' mountain,
By Liriope's calm fountain,
Idly stopp'd, in vacant mood,
And view'd his image in the flood,
Till fancy pierc'd the spangled cell
Where the Naiad lov'd to dwell,
And stamp'd on the reflecting wave
Her beauteous form and spar-hung cave:
Then feign'd she left her marble seat
The self-enamour'd youth to meet.
Still Narcissus in despair
Woo'd the visionary fair;

And faithful Echo, still denied
 To tell her passion at his side,
 Ever doom'd to pine and languish,
 Breath'd the tones of mortal anguish :
 Vainly did the jocund swains
 Call her to the distant plains ;
 O'er the fountain still she hung,
 Still her love's sad tale she sung,
 Till with constancy untir'd
 She in mournful sighs expir'd,
 Ere her lover's blooming years
 Were sever'd by the fatal shears.
 Far different is the flaunting maid
 Who frolics in this woodland shade ;
 Loose her vesture, buskins neat
 Closely fit her nimble feet ;
 Scorning all the flowery meads,
 She binds her flowing locks with reeds,
 And often to adorn them gathers
 The babbling cuckoo's moulted feathers ;
 Or for her careless garland weaves
 The trembling aspen's whispering leaves :
 Thus attir'd she lightly trips,
 Her finger resting on her lips,
 With saintly visage and demure
 Heedless shepherds to allure ;

Yet scarce a youth frequents the vale,
 But she mocks him with some tale,
 Still with each new lover sporting,
 Auster now, now Zephyr courting;
 She will hang on Hyems' car
 When he calls his host to war;
 When the trembling earth he greets,
 Echo his loud threat repeats;
 When the pattering hail descends,
 When the rocking forest bends,
 When the dashing waves rebound,
 When the thunder cleaves the ground,—
 Echo, as each sound she bears,
 Multiplies the peasant's cares;
 On the rabid wolf's loud yells,
 On the vulture's scream she dwells;
 She calls upon the cavern'd rock,
 And bids it imitate the shock
 Of stranded vessels, and reply
 To the sailor's piercing cry;
 Who feebly turns his anxious ear,
 And hopes the promis'd succour near.
 Oft attendant on the owl,
 The bat obscene, or raven foul,
 She haunts yon abbey's mouldering pile,
 And groans along the arched aisle:

When Evening spreads her pall around,
 And Silence deepens every sound,
 Thy whisper, Echo, oft misleads
 The pilgrim telling o'er his beads,
 Who, fancying thee some shade unblest,
 Or wailing ghost, that ne'er must rest,
 Condemn'd through charnel vaults to stray,
 While earth-worms on its body prey,
 Again his rosary begins,
 And shudders at his secret sins.

Still with Terror, Danger's child,
 Dost thou haunt the forest wild,
 Heath-crown'd hill or rocky glen,
 Distant from the walks of men :
 When the merchant homeward bears
 The product of his costly wares,
 Thou bidst his horse's hoofs rebound
 With ten-fold potency of sound ;
 For thou canst change the evening breeze,
 That whispers through the leafless trees,
 To the robber chief's command
 And the answers of his band,
 Till thy scar'd victim seems to feel
 The whizzing ball or gliding steel.

Thus with horrors not its own
 Echo circles Winter's throne :

But when the never-wearied Hours
 Purfle Spring's green scarf with flowers,
 And bind her odour-dropping curls
 With humid Morning's glittering pearls ;
 When young Beauty's magic zone
 Round the laughing Earth is thrown,
 Idle Echo all day long
 Chants the ploughman's rustic song,
 Or loiters by the milk-maid's pail
 And curses " Roger of the vale."
 Then the sportive nymph repeats
 The lost lamb's melancholy bleats ;
 Now she mocks the chattering pye,
 Now the artful plover's cry ;
 Frequently the lark complains
 That Echo mocks his tuneful strains,
 When soaring on advent'rous wings
 He to the Sun's bright palace springs,
 And cherishes the hope sublime
 To emulate the sphery chime :
 Echo that vain hope despises,
 Taunts the boaster as he rises,
 And with soften'd music fills
 All the valleys, all the hills ;
 Till, by rage and envy wounded,
 The poor songster stops astounded,

Falls on earth with flagging wings,
And fancies that a rival sings.

But when, th' ethereal arch ascending,
Cynthia's train, their queen attending,
Spangle the cœrulean height
With gems of many-colour'd light ;
When Silence, arm'd with magic spell,
Steps from Wisdom's holy cell,
Where mid the reign of garish day
Secure from Folly's taunts she lay,
And now enthron'd in sov'reign power
Demands her delegated hour ;
When not an earth-born sound is heard,
Save thy wailings, mournful bird
Of evening, or the solemn knell
Of the distant convent bell,
Or the bleat of folded flocks,
Or the watch-dog, when he mocks
At Dian in her starry hall,
Or the dashing water-fall ;
That hour, when through the yielding trees
Softly creeps the gentle breeze,
When pleading Love in whispers sweet
Pours his vows at Beauty's feet,
And Sorrow, hopeless of relief,
Tells to Night the treasur'd grief

Insulting Day must never hear;
 That hour, to meditation dear,
 Which o'er Nature's still repose
 The veil of contemplation throws,
 Echo for her portion owns,
 And louder lifts her mimic tones:
 Oft those mimic tones she varies,
 To frighten sylphs, and harass fairies;
 Who, starting from their seats of down,
 On the thistle's ripen'd crown,
 Deem some wandering mortal near,
 And doom him to a fate severe.
 Soon their tinkling harpings end,
 Soon they on the plain descend,
 Not to mix in sportive dance,
 Each displays a moon-beam lance,
 Each, th' advent'rous foe to charge,
 Firmly lifts his cobweb targe;
 Plumes of various-colour'd dyes,
 Stolen from gnats and butterflies,
 Shade their helmets, and radiant mail
 Form'd from the cameleon's scale:
 Now, as when on Ethiop's plains
 They combated embattled cranes,
 On they march, and still in scorn
 Before them Echo winds her horn,

And leads them on through thorny brakes,
 Lonely dells, and stagnant lakes,
 O'er many a hill and moss-grown moor,
 Haunted oft by ghosts impure ;
 Faint and tir'd, the tiny race
 Still pursue the bootless chace,
 Till Morn her golden standard waves,
 And sends them to their elfin caves.

Say, Echo, can thy airy shell
 Repeat the notes I lov'd so well?
 Can thy soft witchery chant those strains
 Which faithful memory yet retains,
 And from the silence of the grave
 The voice of faithful friendship save?
 I'll form for thee a lab'rinth meet,
 Resembling thy belov'd retreat
 By Naha's waves*, or near the tomb
 Which tells Metella's† early doom,
 Or Woodstock's maze‡, where Clifford's Rose
 Told thee of lawless love the woes:

* Near Coblenz.

† Metella was the wife of Crassus.

‡ Woodstock Park, near Rosamond's Bower. These places are remarkable for echos.

I'll dive to Ocean's coral cells,
 And search for convoluted shells,
 Whilst thou shouldst form each well-known sound
 Of playful wit and sense profound ;
 Assur'd thy diapason strong
 Would never murmur Flattery's song,
 That Envy's sneer, or Anger's taunt
 Would ne'er my quiet musings haunt ;
 Nor Slander my recess assail
 With one long, dull, invidious tale ;
 Nor Folly, like a painted cheat,
 Wisdom's inverted tones repeat.

In vain thy succour I require ;
 Thou hast no Promethean fire :
 Daughter of sound ! a local chain
 Of trembling vapour bounds thy reign ;
 Thou must not hope with mimic breath
 To charm the sullen ear of Death ;
 Ne'er must thy air-wov'n limbs presume
 To lift the bars which close the tomb ;—
 There my lost treasures will recline,
 Till call'd by other voice than thine.

EARLY ATTACHMENT.

WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF LAURA, 1802.

We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company.

O LAURA ! many a year is pass'd
Since first we met in Nature's prime,
And promis'd that our truth should last
Superior to the rage of time.

And still th' unbroken vows remain,
Though cities sink, and empires bend ;
Though discord and confusion reign,
O Laura ! thou art still my friend.

Yet many a trial have we known ;
By harsh experience both are school'd ;
For all our summer friends are flown,
And all our ardent lovers cool'd.

Doom'd to frequent life's humble vale,
 We prov'd its thorns, we cropp'd its flowers;
 And sought by Duty's measur'd scale
 The path that leads to heavenly bowers.

We both have felt the proud man's scorn,
 And heard vain Wealth our wants upbraid,
 And seen Hope's rosy garland torn,
 And all her fairy visions fade :

And both have met a generous few,
 Who merit Fortune's golden beams;
 Our garlands then have bloom'd anew,
 And Hope hath pictur'd brighter dreams.

Alike we held our Anna dear,
 Alike her firm regard we sought;
 With hearts unstain'd by jealous fear,
 And free from each invidious thought.

Remote from Dissipation's band,
 How gaily pass'd the festive hour!
 When Mirth and Wisdom hand in hand
 Appear'd in Anna's social bower.

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No dark disguise our joys profan'd,
 No wayward whim, no start of spleen;—
 In Anna's look complacence reign'd,
 And she was genius of the scene.

Those festive hours—though many a year
 Proclaim they will return no more,—
 Still memory holds the record dear,
 And lives departed pleasures o'er.

We saw our angel friend decline,
 And watch'd her through her slow decay;
 Compell'd this treasure to resign,
 We wept, and struggled to obey.

With arms entwin'd, we sadly sought
 The tomb where her chaste ashes lie;
 Indulging there the pensive thought,
 We saw her greet us from the sky.

Submissive we ador'd the doom
 That all our dearest joys despoil'd;
 And left with aching hearts her tomb,
 To love her in her orphan child.

O Laura! many a trial hard
 Hath made thee with fresh lustre beam;
 And what in youth was fond regard
 Now ripens into just esteem.

Thy steady virtues do not rise
 From sophistry's precarious strand;
 Ordain'd to reach their native skies,
 They on the Rock of Ages stand.

Thy youth drank deep of wisdom's fount,
 Not sentiment's polluted tide,
 But the pure stream which Sion's mount
 To heal the wounded earth supplied.

Thy noble soul all art disdains,
 Accustom'd to the lore of truth;
 Even partial love with thee retains
 Ingenuous sense and strong reproof.

Five lustres have their course fulfill'd,
 And still the votive altar burns;
 And friendship still, with zeal unchill'd,
 To fan the vestal fire returns.

O Laura ! oft thy patient ear
 Hath listen'd to my plaintive tale ;
 Till Phosphor spoke the morning near,
 And all the starry lamps grew pale.

Thou knew'st each secret of my heart,
 But could I aught from thee disguise ?
 Thou, who couldst see my wishes start,
 And read the language of my eyes.

Say, Laura, did I ask amiss ?
 Indulgent Heaven hath heard my prayer.
 Yet, ere I taste the cup of bliss,
 O come and take thy rightful share *.

What checks my hand, suspends my breath ?
 What dreadful sound my blood congeals ?—
 I speak to the dull ear of Death ;
 That faithful heart no longer feels.

* The author was going to communicate some pleasing intelligence respecting herself to this much esteemed, faithful and long tried friend, when she received the intelligence of her death, after a very short illness.

My friend hath pass'd the dreary vale,
 But not oppress'd with horrors dread;
 She felt all human succour fail,
 She saw each earth-born comfort fled :

Yet on th' Almighty Shepherd's care
 Her spirit, strong in death, relied ;
 And through the regions of despair
 She found the living waters glide.

To thee, my Laura, are reveal'd
 The awful secrets of the tomb :
 Say, Dost thou as a treasure seal'd
 Await the day of final doom?

Or dost thou with some beaming star
 Glide through cœrulean fields above,
 Attendant on an angel's car,
 And witness to his works of love?

Or art thou 'mongst th' æthereal train
 Who visit this sublunar scene,
 To guard the weak, and awe the vain,
 Now hovering o'er my head unseen?

Though I shall hear thy voice no more,
 Nor fondly greet thy welcome face,
 Nor rush to meet thee at the door,
 Impatient for thy warm embrace ;

Still at the close of active day
 Shall memory, to thy virtues just,
 Thy lively portraiture display,
 And animate thy shapeless dust.

And we shall pace the dewy vale,
 The church-yard walk, the shady lane,
 And dwell upon each well-known tale,
 And paint our youthful joys again.

My lonely musings to delight,
 Thy semblance shall before me glide,
 And still the visions of the night
 Shall seat thee smiling at my side.

For mid the charnel's morbid damp,
 A willing victim, Love abides ;
 There lights her never-dying lamp,
 And Memory's faithful pencil guides.

Nor here her sacred duties end,
 To her an angel's plume is given;
 From the dark grave she shall ascend,
 And bear her holy fire to heaven.

Fair flowers of constancy and truth
 The golden censer shall enwreath,
 While Virtue with her shield of proof
 Defends it from the blasts of death.

My Laura! still this faithful breast
 Shall with thy dear remembrance burn;
 This hand, in thine so often prest,
 Shall still embrace thy sacred urn.

TO THYRSIS,

WITH THE AUTHOR'S POEMS,

August 7th, 1799.

ACCEPT, dear youth! from friendship's willing hand
The flowers once scatter'd o'er Miranda's hearse;
No servile mourner wove the votive band,
No venal flatterer breath'd the heart-taught verse.

As on thy ear each plaintive cadence falls,
Thy tears, a grateful tribute, oft shall flow,
While recollection still the scene recalls,
Which taught thee first that "Man is born to woe."

Bright were thy opening prospects, bright the morn
When Childhood crown'd thee with her fairy flowers;
Cropp'd for thy brows the rose without a thorn,
And gave to pleasure all thy laughing hours.

Mild as th' angelic guardians of the blest,
 O'er thee with watchful love Miranda hung,--
 How glow'd the love of virtue in her breast!
 How dwelt the law of kindness on her tongue!

When, sudden raising his petrific mace,
 Death smote the young, the virtuous, and the fair,
 And thy lov'd mother from her fond embrace
 Dropp'd the dear objects of her constant care.

If from that heaven, where, pure among the pure,
 Her happy spirit laves in floods of joy;
 If mortal beings can the blest allure,
 Will not Miranda seek her darling boy?

Then may she view the seed her prudent hand
 Profusely scatter'd in a generous soil,
 Nurs'd by thy fostering vigilance expand,
 Till fruits immortal recompense thy toil.

So shall thy life prolong thy mother's praise,
 While friendship clings to well remembered worth:
 And when of virtue full, and full of days,
 Some angel gently beckons thee from earth,

Then may that form beatified appear
Whom in these numbers I have faintly shown !
And mayst thou through eternity's long year
Increase her glory, and enjoy thy own !

WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF THYRSIS

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1801.

AGAIN, deceitful Hope, thy visions fade,
 Again thy wreaths funereal buds disclose;
 And, blasted by the yew's o'erwhelming shade,
 In vernal beauty drops the half-blown rose.

Nor shall young Thyrsis by his life extend
 The fair memorial of Miranda's praise :
 Bright bloom'd th' inherent virtues of my friend,
 But envious Fate denied them length of days.

No kind maternal spirit smiling bends
 From yon pure heaven his long career to trace;
 No guardian angel on his course attends,
 To speed the progress of his arduous race.

At the fair promise of extended years
 Dire Atrophy her mortal arrow aims;
 The cheek which sentiment's warm blush endears,
 Now with the hectic glow of fever flames.

Lost are those flashes of colloquial grace
 That spoke a soul dispos'd for lofty views;
 In those sunk features we no longer trace
 Th'ingenious son of Science and the Muse.

Yet then, when Death, of triumph sure, unfurl'd
 His pallid flag, and shouted o'er his prey,
 Mid the bright visions of that opening world
 Which Youth depicts in colours ever gay,—

Even then young Thyrsis smil'd : for by his side
 Meek Patience tun'd her harp to joy and praise;
 And still Religion her bright lamp applied
 To gild the twilight of his closing days.

He saw returning Spring, whose balmy reign
 Renews the grove, refuse his pains to heal;
 Refulgent Summer shower'd her fruits in vain;
 And Autumn at the cistern* broke the wheel.

In the same grave which shrouds the parent form
 Till the last trump reclaims the sacred trust,
 Smote by the rigor of lief's pelting storm,
 The tender offspring moulders into dust.

* Ecclesiastes, xii, 6.

Oft when, to bathe that grave with pious dew,
 Affection pours the meek submitted tear,
 Cherubic visions rush upon her view,
 And heavenly harpings sooth her pensive ear.

She hears them sing, dissever'd friends rejoin'd,
 The faithful matron and the blameless youth,
 As in a holy sacristy enshrin'd,
 With kindred forms of innocence and truth.

They sing the germ of endless life, conceal'd
 From Sin's dire taint, and fearless of decay,
 Within a consecrated casket seal'd,
 Awaiting patient Nature's final day.

For angels mete not by the flight of time
 The destin'd space to human action giv'n;
 They hail the pilgrim, who in early prime
 Gains by a shorter course the gates of Heaven.

THE SPARTAN MATRON.

- “ **W**ARRIOR ! from Gods and Heroes sprung,
 The Spartan Matron proudly sung
 While arming her impetuous son ;
 “ Thy country calls thee forth to wield
 “ Her hallow’d sword, and gives a shield
 “ To thy now vig’rous arm—a shield in battle won.
- “ With Lacedæmon’s patriot band
 “ Thy father sought the Phocian strand,
 “ Appall’d th’invading host, and fell :
 “ Still as the blooming spring returns
 “ Shall votive garlands crown their urns,
 “ Still shall th’immortal Muse their names and actions
 “ tell.
- “ Yet still the abject Persian race
 “ The soil of Liberty debase :—
 “ Mark in yon camp the servile train !
 “ By Mithras rous’d, with rites divine
 “ They daily deck their tyrant’s shrine,
 “ Implore less galling stripes, or ask a lighter chain.

" Shall the base hinds, who never knew
 " The glow of patriot zeal, subdue
 " The realm where Freedom is ador'd?
 " Shall the voluptuous Lydian lave
 " His feeble body in the wave
 " Which braces Sparta's nerve, which crowns her fru-
 " gal board?

" Go, boy! and though, to battle new,
 " Thou canst thy leader's path pursue,
 " 'Tis his to guide the glorious toil;
 " 'Tis thine his footsteps to attend
 " O'er the warm body of thy friend,
 " Thro' ranks of hostile spears, o'er heaps of shining spoil-

" Go, guard our laws, whose rigid rein
 " Taught thee thy passions to restrain,
 " And made thee vig'rous, firm and brave;
 " Protect our altars, hearths and sires
 " From Asia's desolating fires,
 " And Sparta's noble dames from barbarous satraps save.

" Fear not to rush, at honour's call,
 " Though hosts on hosts around thee fall,
 " And dread Atropos spread her sheers;
 " Grim Pluto and the shadowy train
 " Who troop through Erebus disdain,
 " Nor let thy pensive thought forebode thy mother's tears.

" If thou return, by warriors borne,
 " With listless arms and tresses torn,
 " A mangled, cold, unconscious clod,
 " I'll listen till I hear each wound
 " Was on thy manly bosom found,
 " Then will I clasp my hands, and bless the martial God.

" But if thy dastard soul should fail,
 " If 'scap'd from combat, trembling, pale,
 " A fugitive thou meet mine eye;
 " If safety be thy sordid aim,
 " No safety from thy mother claim :—
 " Pierc'd by her vengeful arm, base recreant, thou shalt
 " die.

" How could I else, when wild with joy
 " Each matron clasps her victor boy,
 " The honours of my race demand?
 " How bid the votive altar blaze?
 " Or how the choral pæan raise,
 " When on Eurotas' banks the virgin dancers stand?

" Thou king of rivers, to thy care
 " Pleas'd I intrust my blooming heir :
 " Should he with laurel crown'd return,
 " To thy protecting stream I vow
 " These silver locks which shade my brow,
 " And on thy reedy banks a hecatomb shall burn,

" But should he in the rear of fight,
" In captive bonds, or impious flight,
" By some ignoble death expire ;
" I will but live to clear from shame
" His mighty father's injur'd name,
" And then to Stygian shades a sullen ghost retire."

THE BRITISH MOTHER.

" SON of a British Worthy, go !
 " Thy country bids thee meet her foe,"
 The Mother to her son exclaims ;
 While the tall helmet's plume of snow
 Half hides his fair cheek's ardent glow,
 While in his eager grasp the brandish'd fauchion flames.

" Apostate Gaul, whose impious tongue
 " Renounc'd her God, who, bold in wrong,
 " Has ravag'd Europe's fairest plains,
 " Her legion of assassins brings,
 " Drunk with the blood of priests and kings,
 " To waste the peaceful isle where righteous Freedom
 " reigns.

" No generous courage warms their souls,
 " Nor shame nor fear their course controuls,
 " When fire-ey'd Madness bids destroy ;
 " To spread the miseries they feel,
 " To open wounds which none can heal,
 " This is their dæmon hope, and this their hell-born joy.

" Yet Egypt's sandy coast beheld
 " Their navy sunk, their hordes repell'd,
 " And Syria scoff'd their recreant chief;
 " There thy lov'd father met the foe:
 " My child! forgive this burst of woe,
 " Not even a nation's praise can heal a widow's grief.

" Nurs'd in the Muses' bower serene,
 " Well mightst thou fear the horrent mien
 " Of suffering yet remorseless War;
 " Who oft will call thee to sustain
 " Hunger and weariness and pain,
 " Bathe thy young hands in gore, and Mercy's portal bar.

" 'Tis not from lust of vain renown,
 " 'Tis not to win Ambition's crown,
 " 'Tis not from savage thirst of blood;
 " Thy holy purpose is to guard
 " Each object of thy fond regard,
 " All that the wise revere, all that attracts the good.

" Go, by these sacred motives charm'd,
 " With more than human courage warm'd,
 " Thy country's hope! thy monarch's care!
 " Benign Religion's voice serene
 " Shall lead thee through the dreadful scene,
 " Instruct thee to endure, or teach thee when to spare.

" If He whose ever-righteous will
 " Most wisely meets our good and ill
 " Consign thee to an early grave ;
 " If from these widow'd arms forlorn
 " Their last best comfort must be torn,
 " Still will I trust in Him who while he kills can save.

" But should disgrace, far worse than death,
 " Should treason's pestilential breath
 " Attaint thy pure though humble name ;
 " Though her relenting love would fain
 " Conceal thee from the world's disdain,
 " Thy mother's feeble age must sink beneath thy shame.

" For, tell me, what obscure recess
 " Could hide thy guilt and my distress
 " When Freedom breaks Oppression's rod ;
 " When Britain bids her myriads raise
 " The shout of joy, the hymn of praise,
 " To hail their patriot king, to bless their guardian God.

" O Father of the orphan ! Friend
 " Of the lone widow ! I commend
 " This treasure to thy gracious care ;
 " I crave, submissive to thy will,
 " Protection from external ill ;
 " I ask thy saving health in confidence of prayer.

" So may I, when Time's troubled sway
" Ends in Eternity's bright day,
" The darling of my soul rejoin;
" May lead him to his sire's embrace,
" And, bending at the throne of Grace,
" Forget the transient woes that end in bliss divine!"

WARS OF APOSTASY.

To the Editor of the Guardian of Education.

Madam,

Considering you not only as a Christian Soldier, but as actively engaged in ably defending a citadel of vast importance, now furiously assailed by the Prince of darkness; I take the liberty of inscribing to you a recapitulation of a few of those prophecies, on which we build our firm assurance, that his endeavours to overturn the church of God will only redound to his own disgrace, to the immortal advantage of those who fight the good fight of Faith, and to the glory of the Highest.—I remain, Madam, with affection for your private virtues, and veneration for your public labours,

Your sincere friend, I. W.

WHEN Infidelity unfurl'd
 Her banners to th' astonish'd world,
 When, scorning grace, and sin forgiv'n,
 She warr'd against the King of heav'n,
 His holy covenant disdain'd,
 And question'd by what right he reign'd;

She summon'd from the depths of hell
 Hosts on hosts her ranks to swell,
 Numerous as the fiends who sate
 Round Pandæmonium's* throng'd debate,
 Numerous as th' apostate crew
 Who from King Messiah flew †.
 Guilty wishes, rash desires,
 Cruel deeds and lawless fires,
 Dark aspersions, blasphemies,
 Offspring of the sire of lies,
 All combin'd their powers, to plan
 The ruin of heav'n-ransom'd Man.
 Doubt was there, a crawling worm
 That dragg'd on earth its reptile form,
 Yet borrow'd Candour's soothing tone,
 And wish'd that Truth might reign alone.
 Then Pride in fiercer accents spoke,
 And curs'd Jehovah's galling yoke.
 Lust and Gluttony accus'd
 The laws their rebel wills refus'd;
 While Sophistry's presumptuous hand
 Consign'd to Chance the plastic wand,
 And bade her form from chaos rude,
 From atoms indistinct and crude,

* Paradise Lost, book i.

† Ditto, book vi.

From furious elemental jars,
 The sun, the moon, the fixed stars,
 Earth with all her fruits and trees,
 The finny nations of the seas,
 Beasts that through the deserts prowls,
 The lowing herd, the winged fowl,
 And man their lord, of angel form,
 Yet doom'd to perish like a worm!
 He bade this self-form'd world combine
 Duration, beauty and design.
 Credulity approv'd the scheme:
 She turn'd from Truth's irradiate beam,
 To cast on Faith a scornful glance,
 Proud of the universe of Chance.
 Amid this host a fiend was seen
 Who borrow'd sage Instruction's mien:
 Meek was his voice, a gentle smile
 Conceal'd a heart of blackest guile,
 Benevolence his specious aim,
 His ready tears at bidding came,
 He seem'd for Infancy distrest,
 By rigid discipline opprest.
 " Shall grov'ling Prejudice," he cries,
 " Print on the vacant mind its ties?
 " Shall stern Authority compel
 " The heart which Nature bids rebel?

" Can the free heir of free-born man
 " Be crippled by Prescription's plan,
 " And, in a philosophic age,
 " Improve by Revelation's page?
 " No. Let the puling babe be taught
 " To feel the energies of thought;
 " Ev'n while his tottering steps demand
 " The ballast of a guiding hand,
 " Teach the young nursling to debate
 " On right and wrong, on chance and fate;
 " To judge, by his faint dawn of sense,
 " The counsels of Omnipotence;
 " And bid him in his pastimes frame
 " A world that may Jehovah's shame:
 " Then glorious destinies must rise
 " From man, thus early free, and wise."

He paus'd. The triumph well descried
 Swell'd him with joy too vast to hide :
 The mantle of deceit cast off,
 He thus pursu'd his impious scoff.
 " No longer shall the courts of God,
 " Be by babes and sucklings trod !
 " Nor, chorus'd by the lisping tongue
 " Of childhood, be hosannas sung !
 " No more in ecstasy of praise
 " Their clasped hands shall striplings raise.
 " But through the gloomy vaults of hell
 " Shall feeble execrations swell,

- " Its paly light shall only show,
 " Writhing in ever-during woe,
 " Young sinners, whose short term of life
 " Was mark'd by treachery and strife,
 " Who gave their Christian hopes in change
 " For vices premature and strange :
 " Babe Atheists, who in endless fires
 " Now curse their being and their sires.
 " Earth, late the scene of heavenly care,
 " Shall be the mansion of Despair,
 " Where Virtue cannot rest her feet,
 " Nor Peace one safe asylum meet ;
 " While Tophet's dark resounding caves
 " Shall echo with the shrieks of slaves,
 " Who, mingling blasphemy and grief,
 " Attest the triumphs of our chief."

Deluder, cease ! Your impious spleen
 Affects not *Him* who reigns supreme
 Between the cherubs' spreading wings,
 Lord of lords, and King of kings ;
 Reigns in sovereign righteousness—
 Let the earth his guidance bless.
 He, to prove each faithful saint,
 Slips the muzzle of restraint
 From arrogance, and gives its hour
 To Antichrist's rebellious power.
 Presumptuous spirits to chastise,
 He suffers them to trust in lies ;

To punish a licentious realm,
 He calls a tyrant to the helm;
 And lets him like a blazing star
 Menace destruction, death and war.
 But while th' unconscious agent still
 Seems guided by his brutal will;
 While neighbouring states with awe and fear
 Stand gazing at his rash career;
 While Flattery, hymning venal lays,
 Transforms her secret curse to praise,
 And base Submission, crouching low,
 Yields silent to th' invited blow:
 Sudden the homicide shall fall,
 A mystic writing on the wall*
 May trace his doom; an arm may fling†
 A dart, and pierce th' apostate king;
 A stone may from the mountain burst‡,
 Hewn without hands, and grind to dust
 His perishable throne: a sound§,
 A rumour may his hopes confound,
 And bid his host retrace with shame
 The bloody path by which they came.

* See Daniel v. 5.

† See 1 Kings xxii. 34.

‡ See Daniel ii. 34, 35.

§ See 2 Kings xix. 7. 33.

Then Earth, by deep affliction driven
 To turn the eye of faith on heaven,
 Will into singing burst, and call
 Her nations to insult his fall.

- “ O Lucifer*!” she will exclaim,
 “ Wont ’mong the morning stars to flame !
 “ Thou, who assuming rites divine
 “ Stood’st proudly by Jehovah’s shrine,
 “ How art thou fall’n ! Thy pamper’d form
 “ Gluts the foul hunger of the worm ;
 “ Cold are thy silent halls, and mute
 “ Are glory’s trump and flattery’s lute.
 “ Thou ! that didst make a wilderness
 “ Of goodly lands, that didst oppress
 “ Thy helpless captives, hence ! and crave
 “ The stinted mercy of a grave ;
 “ Shrink from thy former idol fame,
 “ And ask oblivion to thy shame :
 “ Ask for some ’whelming rock to hide†
 “ Thy folly, blasphemy and pride
 “ From Him who sitteth on the throne,
 “ The God thy madness would disown :
 “ From the offended Lamb, whom erst
 “ Thy impious tongue renounc’d and curs’d.

* See Isaiah xiv. 7. and subsequent verses.

† See Revelations vi. 16.

- “ To loath’d annihilation creep,
- “ And supplicate eternal sleep;
- “ Yes, supplicate, yet find despair
- “ Chill on thy lips the hopeless prayer,
- “ Point to the hell thou didst despise,
- “ And show the worm that never dies!”

Ye Saints ! who in Religion’s cause
 Stood forth the champions of her laws,
 Ye feeble-minded ! who dismay’d
 Flew to the ark’s protecting shade,
 Ye, who when Man his God defied
 Felt your weak footsteps almost slide,
 Fearing apostate bands would raze
 The holy church which God upstays;
 Bring garlands of triumphant palms,
 Prepare to chorus joyful psalms.
 Sooner shall earth with lawless force
 Burst from her planetary course;
 Sooner shall yonder day-star bright
 Drink his own fires, and blot out light;
 Or that cerulean vault sublime
 Where moving spheres in concert chime,
 To raging dissonance a prey,
 Recall the Anarch’s * turbid sway;

* Chaos.—Vide Milton.

Than the sure word of prophecy,
 Our God's immutable decree,
 Shall of its full completion fail :—

- " The gates of Hell shall ne'er prevail
- " 'Gainst the rock-founded Church. In va
- " Shall Antichrist convoke his train ;
- " Or from th' unfathom'd pit accurst
- " Shall swarms of noxious reptiles burst*.
- " What though the radiant spouse remains
- " In darkness, while the dragon reigns,
- " The man-child shall be born alive,
- " The martyr'd witnesses revive,
- " And the seal'd witnesses declare
- " The pard'ning God whose mark they bear.
- " Till the great angel's voice sublime
- " Proclaims the fated end of Time,
- " Still will the *glorious Rider* lead
- " His armies, and the milk-white steed,
- " As the seven vials pour their woes,
- " Still conquering and to conquer goes ;
- " Till every tongue and nation brings
- " Its tribute to the King of kings."

* These passages are taken almost literally from the Revelations.

SONNETS.

SONNET I.

DELUSIVE Hope! didst thou not say the Nine
With willing wreaths their faithful vot'ries crown'd?
Didst thou not bid my heart with joy rebound,
Oft as before my closing eyes the shrine
Of glory emanating light divine
Danc'd in fantastic vision, while around
Soft fairy harpings breath'd this rapturous sound,
"Immortal fame, O child of verse, is thine!"
Not for the luckless bard will Daphne braid
Her virgin garlands, though profuse they grow;
Not for the bard is Glory's shrine display'd;
Not for the bard does Fame's loud trumpet blow;
Save when the Muses walk in Satire's train,
Or with loud Faction's yell the pomp of song profane.

SONNET II.

WRITTEN IN SPRING, 1800.

AUTHOR of being! life-sustaining king!
Lo Want's dependent eye from thee implores
The seasons which provide nutritious stores:
Give to her prayers the renovating Spring,
And Summer's heats all-perfecting, that bring
The fruits which Autumn from a thousand stores
Selecteth provident; when Earth adores
Her God, and all her tribes exulting sing.
Without thy blessing, the submissive steer
Bends to the ploughman's galling yoke in vain;
Without thy blessing on the varied year
Can the swart reaper grasp the golden grain?
Without thy blessing, all is blank and drear:
With it, the joys of Eden bloom again.

SONNET III.

ON WALKING IN THE PLEASURE-GROUNDS OF
A DECEASED FRIEND.

THE frost of Winter nipp'd the tender rose,
Yet spar'd the germ of being. Here again
The silver aspen and the leafy plane
O'er-hang the woodbine, who around them throws
Her honey'd foliage : mild the zephyr blows,
The ring-dove murmurs, and I catch thy strain,
Most tuneful nightingale ! while Cynthia's train
O'erlook recumbent nature's soft repose.
Are not these trees and flowers still sweet and green ?
Shines with less lustre yon cerulean host ?
Yet Pleasure flies the late attractive scene,
And leaves me sorrowing o'er a treasure lost.
Ah what can fill the heart-oppressing void
Of social happiness, here once enjoy'd ?

SONNET IV.

ON HEARING DISTANT VILLAGE PSALMODY.

I LOVE to listen while the village choir,
 By infant voices soften'd, praise thy name,
 All-great Jehovah ! for thou dost not claim
 The song irradiate with poetic fire :
 The pure in heart may happily aspire
 With reverent joy to celebrate thy fame,
 Catching from fervent piety that flame
 Which kindles on the seraph's breathing lyre.
 Still may I hear this holy sabbath strain !
 Unlike the Gallic decad's pagan hymn,
 With which fierce Moloch animates his train,
 And bids them through fresh tides of carnage swim
 To end thy empire, fated to remain
 When yon resplendent day-star waxes dim.

SONNET V.

ON MISS SEWARD'S COMPLAINING OF INDISPOSITION.

IN what pure urn, with holy spells secur'd,
 Dost thou, bright Health, conceal thy vital stores?
 No common suppliant now thy shrine adores,
 No pallid victim who has scarce abjur'd
 False Circe's madd'ning cup, no slave allur'd
 By pining av'rice to the barren shores
 Of sickly care, no wretch who late deplores
 The pomp by forfeit innocence secur'd:—
 'Tis the sweet sister of the tuneful Nine,
 The British songstress, dignified and chaste;
 She who was wont in Delphic braid to join
 Italian harmony and Attic taste.
 O Health! to her thy living founts display,
 And claim the rapture of her votive lay.

SONNET VI.

TO MRS. B——

Go thou, where Severn to Ierne's main
Rolls her full tide of waters; let thine eyes
From some adjacent crag with glad surprise
Hail the blue Cambrian mountains; or the plain
Which Avon meliorates; or thy domain,
Happy Devon, where salubrious skies
And health-restoring gales disperse the sighs
Of Beauty fainting on the couch of pain.
Be mine that social vale whose features wear
No proud distortion, cultur'd, rich and calm;
For Friendship's cherish'd form hath planted there
Her classic olive, and her Christian palm:
Does not her cordial cup relieve despair?
Can Bristol's founts distil more precious balm

SONNET VII.

STERN foe of fragile man, relentless Time!
 How quickly hast thou stoln my happy days,
 When buoyant hope and animating praise
 Upbore my soul to the Hesperian clime
 Of Fantasy! Oh! then what views sublime
 Entranc'd me! How did my enraptur'd gaze
 Dwell on the scenes of life's untrodden maze,
 Rob'd in the joyous vest of youthful prime!
 I do not sigh because thy sober gray
 Blends with the chesnut in my changing hair,
 Nor that the roses on my cheek decay,
 Nor that my brow is wrinkled o'er by care:—
 I mourn the friends whom death hath snatch'd away,
 I mourn life's present prospects blank and bare.

SONNET VIII.

WHAT painted vessel on the placid sea
 Of youthful Hope expands its silken sails,
 Dips its smooth prow, and courts the favouring gales,
 Lull'd by these strains of syren flattery?
 "Happy adventurer! speed thy course; for thee
 "The di'mond flames, and Araby exhales
 "Her gums odorous. Lo thy star prevails;
 "Haste! to the haven of thy wishes flee."
 I know the voyager; beside the helm
 Young Confidence reclines, a smiling, form;
 She braves the whirlpools in the wat'ry realm,
 Scorns the sunk rock, and dares th'approaching
 storm.
 Ask'st thou her fate?—Where yon hoarse breakers roar
 I mark'd the shipwreck driving on the shore.

SONNET IX.

WRITTEN MAY 16TH 1802, AFTER A SEVERE FROSTY
NIGHT.

HAS the young Hope, which dress'd herself so gay
 With fruits and flowers from rich Valdarno's shores,
 Wing'd her delusive flight? Ah! why deplores
 The lab'ring peasant? Has his toilsome day
 Been vainly spent, while premature decay
 Strips the scath'd orchard of Pomona's stores,
 And Winter with usurp'd dominion roars
 His proud defiance to imprison'd May,
 Who mourns her blasted flowers? Yet, pensive swain,
 Though Flora's vernal beauty is despoil'd,
 Ceres has guarded well her golden grain;
 And thou, Simplicity's untainted child,
 Shalt welcome humble Plenty to thy cot—
 Remember Famine's pangs, and bless thy happier lot.

SONNET X.

TO MISS C——

FAIR maid ! to lure thee from Ierne's shore
 I saw the youthful Spring with whisper bland
 Woo Titan from Arabia's happy land,
 And bind in rosy fetters Winter hoar.
 In a green vest, with daisies sprinkled o'er,
 She clad decrepit Janus ; from his hand
 Boldly she snatch'd the storm-compelling wand,
 And bade him shower his icy darts no more.
 To thee, her vot'ry, she aspir'd to bring
 The earliest produce of this genial soil :—
 Receive the tribute of the bounteous spring,
 And greet thy country with a filial smile :
 For her the Hours propitious offerings choose,
 Hers are the fruits of Science and the Muse.

SONNET XI.

TO MISS S. S.—

BY Pallas led, Penelope's young heir
 Forsook the shelter of his native soil;
 He 'scap'd untainted Cypria's guilty isle,
 And Tyrian fraud, and Libyan deserts bare;
 In vain Ogygia's * nymph divinely fair,
 Or blue-ey'd Eucharis with witching smile,
 Sought to allure him from stern Virtue's toil,—
 The guardian goddess broke each hostile snare.
 And, favour'd maid ! again th' Athenian queen
 Descends to lead thee through life's tangled maze,
 For in maternal Friendship's form serene
 Her buckler guards thee, and her spear upstays :—
 Go, and with Pleasure's rose thy brows adorn,
 Discretion shall disarm it of its thorn.

* Calypso.

SONNET XII.

TO C. S. ESQ.

FOR thee, my friend, whom the frail body's ills
 Sorely afflict, I do not ask the aid
 Of fabled Pæan, nor the rosy maid
 Hygeia, feign'd to rule o'er heath-crown'd hills,
 Soft balmy gales, and life-restoring rills;
 For well I know the Muse's visions fade
 In the drear confines of that darksome glade
 Which Death with his preluding horror fills:—
 Yet shall the Christian soul of help despair?
 He who created thee can surely heal
 Thy wounded frame, and all our sorrows cure;
 Him will I seek in confidence of prayer,
 And say Religion needs thy ardent zeal,
 Thy deep research and thy example pure.

SONNET XIII.

O! THE lost pleasures of the social hour,
 When Genius, Taste and Learning did attend
 On the grac'd presence of our valued friend,
 And tun'd their lyres in this secluded bower!
 Them Humour join'd; not she, the wanton power
 Whom Bacchus courts, but she who oft would wend
 To Tully's Antium, or for Flaccus blend
 With deathless bays the myrtle's snowy flower.
 O dear and guiltless joys! how thick the gloom
 That now impends! No scenes of festal mirth!
 The harbingers of Death unveil the tomb,
 And Disappointment weeps o'er fading Worth.
 The sun of Genius seems of splendor shorn,
 And each sad Muse retires with tresses torn.

SONNET XIV.

WRITTEN IN THE SPRING OF 1803.

The gentleman who was the subject of this and the preceding sonnets never recovered from the effects of the influenza, which destroyed every hope that his life might be prolonged.

STILL with capricious passion faithless May
 Embraces Winter; Still his drifting snow
 Chills her frail hyacinths; Pomona's blow,
 Stiff with incrusting frost, on every spray
 Shines through its crystal prison, vainly gay!
 The blasted blossoms will no fruit bestow.
 Yet small this ravage, ruthless Winter! know
 Thy long-protracted reign hath swept away
 A plant more precious than e'er sprung from earth,
 The growth of intellect and moral worth,
 In all its pride of summer bloom o'erthrown.
 Yet though thy icy hand refus'd to spare,
 This wither'd stem shall fruits immortal bear,
 In regions where thy rigours are unknown.

SONNET XV.

I SOUGHT thee, Lycid, in that sacred dome
Where oft, religion beaming in thine eye,
Thy thoughts aspir'd to Him who sits on high,
And held communion with the world to come :
Still sounds the preacher's well-known voice, again
I hear the pealing organ's solemn tone ;
But thy responding strain I seek in vain—
Faded and mute, beneath that path-worn stone
Are laid the ruins of the clay-cold clod,
Once the fair casket of thy soul serene,
Perchance still hov'ring in this favour'd scene,
To bid Affliction in the house of God
Suspend her pangs, and bow to the award
Which call'd thee, faithful servant, to thy Lord.

SONNET XVI.

TO A YOUNG LADY ON HER MARRIAGE,
December 31, 1804.

FAIR maid ! though Winter's unrelenting frown
 Forbid the emblems of the Cyprian queen,
 Roses blush-tinctur'd, white and damascene,
 And lilies pure to braid thy nuptial crown ;
 Yet shall the myrtle, whose perennial green
 Defies the terrors of the changing year,
 Triumphant in that mystic band appear,
 Symbol of faith and sanctity serene.
 For Hymen, when he destin'd thee to wear
 His silken chains, resolv'd by happy care
 To lead a willing captive to his shrine ;
 He form'd no golden toils, no mean device,
 But bought thee with a pearl of countless price,
 Even with a heart the fellow gem to thine.

TO THE

HONOURABLE MRS. C—

O! SOLE survivor of the faithful band
 Who crown'd my youthful Muse with garlands fair,
 Taught me to strike the lyre with bolder hand,
 And chas'd the gloomy visions of despair!

Then Hebe's smiles thy playful features dress'd,
 Then thy light step announc'd the Idalian queen;
 While fond Affection kindling in my breast
 Avow'd thee fairest of the rural scene.

While Love diffus'd his purple light around
 I saw thee bow to Hymen's gentle reign;
 The thornless rose thy nuptial chaplet crown'd,
 And Taste and Genius rank'd thee in their train.

Call'd to the crowded haunts of public life,
 The dangerous school of vanity and art,
 The hallow'd claims of mother and of wife
 Still wak'd their pure emotions in thy heart.

In foreign climes, where Circe's madd'ning bowl
 Stamp'd the brute visage on her captive crew,
 The sorceress saw thee arm'd in Virtue's stole,
 Dropp'd her accursed beverage, and withdrew.

In realms where Beauty sees her empire end
 In the faint glitter of licentious sway,
 'Twas thine to show how British matrons blend
 The Cyprian myrtle with Minerva's bay.

And here let Friendship boast, with conscious pride
 From courtly pomp thine eye would often turn
 To the lone cottage where by Welland's side
 My votive wreaths adorn'd thy sister's urn.

To bounded views and narrow prospects born,
 I, like a humble plant of woodland birth,
 Beneath the shelter of the parent thorn
 Produc'd my blossoms in my native earth;

Pleas'd when the heav'n-born Muse would deign to lend
 Her beams divine to cheer the lonely hour;
 Pleas'd when some kindred mind, or faithful friend,
 Dispell'd the sameness of the rustic bower.

Five lustres have revolv'd, the years of prime!
 Imperious duty claim'd each anxious day;
 Again we meet, and from the heights of time
 The shades of our departed years survey,

Ah! what a motley prospect bursts to view!
 Tost in one vortex joys and sorrows roll,
 And hope and fear, like the chameleon's hue,
 Change with the changing prospect of the soul.

See wavering Love his wayward laws repeal!
 See Misery lurking in the mask of Mirth!
 And Death affixing his oblivious seal
 On rising Genius and expanding Worth!

And can we from this eminence serene
 Behold the tempest pour along the plain,
 Yet wish to mingle in the turbid scene,
 And feel the pangs of feverish youth again....

Save to erase sad Error's deep record,
 To wake the music of responding hearts,
 Or yet again to taste the sweet reward
 Which silent Virtue's conscious smile imparts.

Autumnal life, this privilege is thine—
 While Nature's vivid hues around thee fade,
 And gathering clouds announce the sun's decline,
 To gaze serenely on the deep'ning shade.

Yet not engross'd in philosophic pride
 Shall moral spleen the mental calm deform;
 Nor let the shelter'd traveller deride
 The youthful pilgrim struggling with the storm.

Wak'd by the impulse of imperious ties,
 To gentle Sympathy's endearing view
 Life's early visions pass before our eyes,
 Again the passions their stern war renew.

Again each devious wandering we lament,
 Or feel the pressure of remember'd cares;
 Joy seems again more lovely than content,
 Again the world its painted vizard wears.

So sweet, so fair, the dear deluder smiles,
 We cease to wonder she so oft betrays :
 So varied, Youth, appear thy woes and toils,
 That censure yields to pity or to praise.

With aspect mild, with manners sweetly bland,
 Anxious to save, unwilling to dismay,
 On Time's calm summit let Experience stand,
 And light the beacon of her guiding ray.

Here let her faithful narrative explain
 The surest road to Virtue's rocky steeps ;
 Ingenuous youth shall bless her warning strain,
 And shun the thicket where the serpent sleeps.

How sweet the scene, when round some matron mild
 With placid smiles her beauteous daughters bend,
 When the soft features of each list'ning child
 Reflect the precepts of their dearest friend !

Duty and Love, two forms of heavenly birth,
 Who reign'd of old in Eden's bowers serene,
 Again revisit the deserted earth,
 To guard with halcyon wings this sacred scene.

This sacred scene my muse aspires to paint;
Wilt thou such efforts of her art approve?
Nor will the lines be weak, nor colours faint,
Since my heart copies from the friend I love.



RURAL DISAPPOINTMENTS.

No more a carol will I sing,
 False May, at thy returning reign;
 O treacherous nurse of youthful Spring!
 Yield'st thou thy charge to Winter's chain?

Thou canst not be the bounteous fair
 In sweet Arcadia's valleys born,
 Who fill'd with balm the tepid air,
 And bless'd the earth with Plenty's horn.

Oft have I watch'd the tender green,
 The bursting germs, the vivid blow;
 Till Fancy, kindling at the scene,
 Beheld the golden fruitage glow.

I've seen thee doff thy verdant vest,
 And cast aside thy flowery crown;
 And, like some dark enchanter drest,
 Transform creation with thy frown.

I've seen thee bind Pomona's bloom
 Within an icy prison drear;
 And bid the drooping groves assume
 The liv'ry of the dying year.

The Lilac has been forc'd to yield
 The pomp of her imperial veil;
 Nor could the tall Acacia shield
 Her pensile clusters, fair and frail.

In the round hail-stones' frigid cage
 Her myriad bands the Mildew forms;
 Th' insatiate Canker's wasteful rage
 Pursues the track of vernal storms.

Tremendous roars the northern wind,
 And drives me shivering to the hearth;
 While all the flowers for thee design'd
 Lie blasted on the frozen earth.

Fail'd I thy cowslip crown to braid;
 Fail'd I thy votive shrine to rear;
 That thus my garden and my glade
 Ask, vainly ask, thy genial care?

For me no golden foliage glows,
 No purple grapes o'erhang my bower ;
 I only crop a stunted rose,
 Or gather berries harsh and sour.

Ah me ! returning seasons bring
 To my sad hopes but short relief ;
 They swell with the first buds of spring,
 And wither with the blighted leaf.

FINGAL IN LOCHLIN :

A TALE.

The names, characters, sentiments and manners of this poem are taken from the compositions attributed to Ossian ; the story is altered in the catastrophe. Those who are desirous of tracing the resemblance will consult the poem called Cath Loda, duan the first and the third ; and also the third book of Fingal. Such readers who wish to avoid the trouble of reference will not dislike to be informed that Fingal was king of Morven, the western part of Caledonia : Selma was his royal seat. His mortal enemy, Starvo, was king of Lochlin, part of antient Scandinavia, and Gormal was his residence. Loda is the name given by Ossian to Odin, the God of the northern nations.

“ MY soul demands the watch to-night ! ”

The king of Morven cries,
While anxious for the dangerous post
His heroes round him rise.

'Scap'd from the sea, and safely moor'd,
 His well-built vessels lay ;
 Screen'd from the terrors of the storm
 By wide Uthorno's bay.

Long had the stormy winds been loos'd :
 Their rage at length declines ;
 And, as the dark clouds roll away,
 The moon serenely shines.

The king rejoices at the sight,
 He numbers all the band ;
 Safe from the deep, and arm'd for war,
 His warriors round him stand.

He climbs a rock, and casts his eyes
 O'er forest, hill and glen ;
 And sees the moon-beams dimly mark
 The distant haunts of men.

He looks again : " Ah sight accurst !
 " Those towers too well I know ;
 " 'Tis Gormal, Starno's royal seat,
 " My false, my mortal foe !

" Long since, when the warm blush of youth
 " This war-worn visage dress'd,
 " And all its confidence and hope
 " Inspir'd my glowing breast,

" In Starno's halls I tarried long,
 " 'Twas Love my steps detain'd;
 " A maiden, Scandinavia's pride,
 " My willing heart enchain'd.

" 'Twas Agandeca, Starno's heir:—
 " Full many a year has fled
 " Since by the death for me design'd
 " The faithful princess bled.

" Warriors! I've met with equal fate,
 " Each storm of fate severe;
 " Yet the sad story of my love
 " Still claims the bitter tear.

" Still, when beside me in the field
 " Some lov'd compatriot falls,
 " His dying groan, his streaming blood,
 " That fatal deed recalls.

" We met in Loda's hallow'd grove
 " Our plighted vows to seal;
 " And there the daughter's breast receiv'd
 " The father's erring steel.

" I saw her like the rising moon
 " Shine beauteous at my side;
 " I saw her sink, as piles of snow
 " From Ronan's summits slide.

" I sunk beside my lov'd-one's corpse;
 " But Morven's heroes rose,
 " Convey'd me to my distant ships,
 " And chas'd away my foes.

" Restor'd to Selma's royal towers,
 " I sought in war relief;
 " And the keen torment of his woes
 " To conquest urg'd your chief.

" But childless Starno still is doom'd,
 " In fulness of despair,
 " To mourn the dark and treacherous deed
 " Which murder'd Lochlin's heir."

" He is not childless," to the king
 Replied a warrior sage ;
 " For Swaran lives, a noble youth,
 " The son of Starno's age.

" Dark is the cruel father's soul ;
 " But all the son revere,
 " For graces of no common sort
 " In Swaran's form appear.

" He would not crush a prostrate worm
 " If at his feet it lay ;
 " Nor would he fear from rav'ning bears
 " To snatch their trembling prey.

" To visit Lulan's neighbouring court
 " The king of Lochlin went,
 " And many a day in royal sports
 " The kindred monarchs spent.

" Some trivial courtesy o'erlook'd
 " Inflam'd curs'd Starno's pride ;
 " Mid the wild woods by Lulan's lake
 " Unhappy Torcul died.

" 'Tis said his daughter Moina * saw

" Their base ungrateful guest

" Turn his barb'd jav'lin from the boar,

" And aim at Torcul's breast.

" But strange and doubtful is her tale ;

" For since that fatal day

" Distracted Moina hath remain'd

" To wild despair a prey.

" Amid Uthorno's rocks, the maid

" Of Starno's crimes complains ;

" The fisher sailing in his skiff

" Oft hears her plaintive strains.

" Now Lulan's crown by right of blood

" Descends to Lochlin's heir ;

" But noble Swaran still disdains

" The bloody spoil to wear.

" Starno," he cries, " may seize the arms

" From murder'd Torcul torn,

" But still will Starno's son the crown

" Of murder'd Torcul scorn.

* In Ossian she is called Corban Carglass.

" Full oft he strays from Gormal's walls,
" And in some desert pines ;
" His beauty like a cloudy moon
" Through misty sorrow shines,

" And often at the feast of shells
" He turns aside to grieve,
" Nor does disdainful Starno seek
" His anguish to relieve:

" For though the king's declining age
" Might some support require,
" The virtues of the gallant son
" Offend the envious sire.

" Thus thy inveterate foe Fingal
" A prey to grief remains ;
" And still thy lovely consort's blood
" The house of Lochlin stains,"

" Warriors ! I claim the watch tonight,"
Said woody Morven's king ;
" Go heap the piles of blazing oak,
" And wake the tuneful string.

- " Be Agandeca's faith your theme ;
- " Fair Moina's wrongs recall ;
- " And let the curses of the brave
- " On cruel Starno fall."

Fingal bounds over Turthor's stream,
 And rests upon his spear ;
 A pale form floats before his sight,
 A faint voice meets his ear.

- " O Torcul ! O my father ! king
- " Of Lulan's sable wave !
- " Dost thou forget me, that I sit
- " Thus lonely in my cave ?

- " I saw thee slain, I saw thee fall
- " As falls the mountain boar ;
- " Thy cold head rested on my breast,
- " These tresses stanch'd thy gore.

- " Perfidious Starno wears thy arms ;
- " Yet I have seen thee lay
- " Thy shadowy buckler o'er the moon,
- " And quench her silver ray.

" I've seen thee in a cloudy night
 " The ghosts of heroes chase;
 " Bright meteors kindling in thy hair
 " Disclos'd thy aged face.

" I've heard thee in Valkalla's hall
 " Wake the responding shell;
 " Thy theme the story of my woes,
 " I knew that theme too well.

" Chief of the azure buckler! king
 " Of Bothnia's western sands!
 " O hasten to thy daughter's arms!
 " O break these galling bands!"

" Where art thou, mournful voice of night?
 " Fingal is near to save."
 The pale form faded from his view,
 And silent was the cave.

" Art thou an inmate of the sky
 " Embodied in a cloud?
 " Or some poor habitant of earth
 " By deep affliction bow'd?

" Speak from thy cave, thou voice of night!"

" I come relief to bring;

" Ne'er has the child of sorrow curs'd

" The name of Morven's king."

Then from the cavern's deep recess

A rustling sound was heard;

Advancing swift, with faltering pace,

A lovely maid appear'd.

Loose o'er her bosom hung her hair,

Black as the raven's plume,

Wild was the lustre of her eye,

And faded was her bloom.

" Thou art not Starno!" she exclaim'd;

" Thou bears't not Torcul arms!

" Nor art thou that bright beam of youth

" Whose dear remembrance charms.

" The evening star sunk in the sea

" Since lonely here I lay,

" And thrice in pity to my grief

" The moon hath pal'd away.

" And thrice from Loda's hallow'd grove

" This voice hath met my ear ;

" 'Fair maid of Lulan ! must thou still

" Endure this fate severe ?'

" It came not from the fearful God

" Who dwells that grove among ;

" For all the spoils of Starno's wars

" Round Loda's shrine are hung.

" It came not from proud Eochlin's king

" To promise me redress ;

" For every day he seeks my cave

" And mocks at my distress.

" It came not from my father's ghost,

" For 'twas a powerful strain ;

" And they who wander through the clouds

" In feeble notes complain.

" But once I saw beside my cave

" A youth of form divine ;

" And still I think that pitying voice,

" O beauteous youth ! was thine.

" Inquire no further—Generous king,
 " 'Twere impious to explain—
 " An injur'd princess does not think
 " Save of her father slain.

" Chief of the azure buckler! king
 " Of Bothnia's western sands!
 " O hasten to thy daughter's arms,
 " O break these galling bands!"

Fingal uprais'd his powerful sword,
 The bands dissever'd fell:
 " Fair daughter of affliction, rise
 " And quit thy lonely cell.

" O look not at yon dark-rob'd moon
 " To see thy father's ghost;
 " My warriors rest by yon pale fires,
 " My ships are on the coast.

" Soon as thy foes are laid in dust
 " To Morven thou shalt sail;
 " And there shall Selma's happy dames
 " The royal stranger hail.

" Our white-arm'd virgins sit not sad;
 " In caverns rude and bare;
 " They smile in Selma's lofty halls,
 " Our plenteous feasts they share.

" For us they tune their golden harps,
 " Joy vibrates on the string;
 " Of virtuous love, and manly truth,
 " And generous deeds they sing.

" O turn then from this house of woe;
 " The voice of friendship hear;
 " The kindlier suns of Selma's towers
 " Thy drooping form shall cheer."

" I'll gaze no longer on the moon,
 " Thy friendly voice I'll hear;
 " But let me save that beauteous youth
 " From Morven's hostile spear.

" Lest he to join me in the clouds
 " Should rush upon thy powers,
 " I'll say I seek the kindlier sun
 " That beams on Selma's towers.

“ Soon shall I wake the well-known strain—
 “ It dwells in Loda’s grove;
 “ And Moina then with Selma’s dames
 “ May sing of happy love.”

She said, and flew to Loda’s grove,
 And pierc’d the thickest shade;
 Deep horror thrill’d Fingal’s bold heart
 As he pursu’d the maid.

That grove, the scene of all his woes,
 Where Agandeca fell!
 And Loda’s blood-stain’d God obeys
 The wizard’s potent spell.

“ Sinks my bold heart?” the king exclaim’d,
 “ The maid can die no more!”—
 He stopp’d aghast, two fearful forms
 At distance to explore.

One in the priestly stole array’d
 Stood fix’d in charmed trance;
 The other wore a warrior’s mail,
 And rested on a lance.

The stone of power beside them stood,
 While from a neighb'ring cave
 With bellowing fury Turthor pour'd
 Its dark and gelid wave.

He heard the loud and fearful voice
 Of imprecation sound,
 And bats obscene flew oe'r their heads,
 And reptiles hiss'd around.

Then slowly kindled through the grove
 Pale fires of livid hue;
 And Loda like a hill of mist
 Expanded to the view.

The stars shone dimly through his shield,
 Earth trembled as he trod,
 While the bright moon retir'd behind
 The helm of Lochlin's God.

He spoke, the forest seem'd to bend
 Disparted by his yell:
 "Who calls me from my deep repose?
 "And whence this potent spell?"

" Break thou the spear of Morven's king!"

A voice repeated dire:

Fingal advanc'd, and saw the face

Of Agandeca's sire.

More dreadful than the dreadful God!

By savage Lochlin fear'd

Fell Starno's wild and haggard form

To Morven's king appear'd.

" Here where the beauteous daughter bled

" Let the curs'd father die;

" Come forth, my sword! thy charmed blade

" Can Loda's power defy.

" Yet shall the wrongs of injur'd love

" Inspire ungenerous rage?

" Fingal is mighty in his strength,

" And Starno worn with age.

" False murderer! though thy silver locks

" My vengeful arm restrain,

" Lochlin shall mourn thy bloody deeds,

" And feel her conqueror's chain.

" Morven but waits her king's commands,
 " Soon will the battle join;
 " Nor can thy spell-created God
 " Protect his bloody shrine."

He said, and thrice he smote his shield;
 And thrice his sword revolv'd;
 And the dim form of Lochlin's God
 In curling smoke dissolv'd.

But where is Starno? Through the grove
 The treacherous monarch flies,
 To seek young Swaran's well-known haunt,
 To whom he sternly cries,

" Why wilt thou still the cureless woes
 " Of Lulan's maid deplore,
 " While woody Morven's hostile ships
 " Invade thy native shore?

" The King of shields conducts the host,
 " A name in battle known;
 " Say, recreant boy, shall Starno's foe
 " Erect his funeral stone?"

" Give me thy lance," young Swaran said;
 " And give me too thy helm;
 " And Mervin's sons shall curse the day
 " They steer'd for Lochlin's realm."

" Speak low, my son," false Starno cried;
 " With cautious step proceed;
 " Fingal reclines beneath yon oak,
 " There let the mighty bleed:

" His shield hath sounded, and his bands
 " March from Uthorno's bay;
 " Be swift, my son, and strike unseen
 " While Morven's bands delay.

" Soon will the dusky twilight end,
 " Behold morn's rising beam;
 " Be swift, my son, and plunge the corse
 " In Turthor's rapid stream.

" Do thou assume his helm and mail;
 " Conceal'd by that disguise,
 " His bands will follow thee, and meet
 " The snare which I devise."

" I slay not darkling," said the youth;
 " My actions love the light;
 " Yet screaming vultures still pursue
 " My bloody path in fight.

" Shades of the mighty who have fall'n!
 " Rise! and my soul implead,
 " If Swaran owes his fame in arms
 " To one perfidious deed."

Dark in his wrath the king arose,
 He bar'd his fatal sword;
 That sword which once the snowy breast
 Of Agandeca gor'd.

He rais'd it high. O frantic prince!
 Made childless once by rage,
 Revere thy son, thy second hope,
 The offspring of thy age!

His virtues spare! Young Swaran sinks,
 His soul seems on the wing;
 A warding shield protects the youth,
 The shield of Morven's king.

Hast thou beheld a hungry wolf
 Forc'd from his bleeding prey,
 Again on the pale victim dart,
 And hold the hounds at bay ?

So Starno turns ; again he lifts
 His sword with crimson dyed,
 And feels the king's portended spear
 Cold through his bosom glide.

But who is this with streaming hair
 That rushes through the grove ?
 'Tis frantic Moina, Lulan's maid,
 She seeks that voice of love.

" I caught the well-known sound again,
 " The voice I love so well ;
 " It spoke in high and generous tone,
 " It issu'd from this cell.

" But wherefore sounds that clash of arms ?
 " And who is laid so low ?
 " And why does that vindictive chief
 " Assail an aged foe ?"

The rising sun a golden ray
 On prostrate Swaran threw,
 And Moina, as she caught the beam,
 Her bleeding hero knew.

“ O lover of the mournful maid !
 “ Fall’n by thy native stream !
 “ The kindlier suns of Selma’s towers
 “ Shall ne’er on Moina beam.

“ But I will seek Valhalla’s hall,
 “ And by its paly fires
 “ Discern young Swaran’s kindred shade
 “ High seated ’mongst my sires.

“ We’ll chase our prey along the clouds,
 “ And, when our darts are thrown,
 “ We’ll sit upon the floating mist,
 “ And sing of worlds unknown.”

The youth revives, his eyes unclose,
 Life flushes on his cheek ;
 He grasps the pale maid’s trembling hand,
 He tries in vain to speak—

To promise love, and happy days,
 And Lulan's crown restor'd :—
 He feels a cruel Father's crimes
 Wound deeper than his sword.

But o'er the mournful pair Fingal
 Now bends, his aid to give ;
 To sooth distracted Moina's grief,
 To bid young Swaran live.

“ Nor deep nor mortal is the wound
 “ The tyrant's fury made,
 “ And soon shall pity's tender cares
 “ Restore this injur'd maid.

“ The cruel spoiler of your love
 “ Is fall'n to rise no more :
 “ Tomorrow's sun shall Morven's bands
 “ Depart from Lochlin's shore.

“ But first a contract I will form
 “ With Swaran void of guile ;
 “ Peace to wild Lochlin's rocks and lakes,
 “ And peace to Morven's isle !

" To Starno's son, who nobly scorn'd

" His father's guilt to share,

" Be a long line of happy years-

" Unvex'd by Starno's care!

" My Agandeca! yet again

" Thy shadowy form display,

" Burst from yon rainbow-tinctur'd cloud

" That skirts Uthorno's bay.

" Rise in thy charms, my love, and strike

" Thy airy shell once more;

" Breathe the soft strain which sooth'd my woes

" On Morven's distant shore.

" It was the song of sever'd love,

" And Lochlin was its scene,

" The grove of Loda, Turthor's stream,

" And Gormal's valleys green.

" By Turthor's stream, in Loda's grove,

" A kindred maid appears,

" And may the days which thou hast lost

" Be added to her years!

- " In these thy lov'd, thy native haunts
 " No hostile bands shall join;
 " But there shall Freya's* snowy hands
 " The nuptial fillet twine.
- " Warriors of Morven, hasten home,
 " And hang your lances high!
 " No more, except in rural sports,
 " The missile deaths shall fly;
- " No more my vessels scour the main,
 " My banners blaze no more;
 " My murder'd consort's ghost shall rest,
 " And Morven wars no more.
- " But still in Selma's ample halls
 " The banquet we'll prolong,
 " And aged bards and dark-eyed maids
 " Shall swell the powerful song.
- " The song shall speak of days of old,
 " And chant our fathers' praise,
 " The spirits of our mighty sires
 " Shall listen to the lays.

* The Scandinavian Venus.

" Still shall the sons of want and woe
" Partake my bounteous store ;
" Till in the narrow house confin'd
" I spread the feast no more.

" Then o'er me be the mossy stones
" In due memorial roll'd !
" And tell my wars and tell my loves
" Among your tales of old !"

LYCID, AN ELEGIAC POEM.

WRITTEN IN THE SPRING OF 1804.

Call now to mind what high capacious powers
 Lie folded up in man,—how far beyond
 The praise of mortals may th' eternal growth
 Of nature, to perfection half divine,
 Exalt the human soul!

AKENSIDE.

DECK'D in her flowery robe and crown of pearls,
 Advancing Spring her verdant flag unfurls;
 Through the long silent woodlands wakes again
 The cheerful chorus of the feather'd train,
 And calls the insect nations to unfold
 Their gauzy wings and mail bedropt with gold.
 Sate of rest, the tenants of the hive
 Now quit their banquet, and to toil revive.
 No more the bulb or seed with texture firm
 Hold in their rigid grasp the swelling germ;
 Forth shoots the spiral stem, the leaves uncoil,
 And flowers and fruits requite the peasant's toil.
 Wide o'er the meadows, hills, and thorny brakes
 Life opens, and with life young Pleasure wakes,

To pour the song which nature understands,
 The well-known language of a thousand lands !
 The sportive lambs, with limbs elastic, pace
 O'er the green head-lands in fantastic chase;
 While from their dams who graze the lower grounds
 Mingled with bleats the tinkling sheep-bell sounds.
 The bellowing ox the husky straw disdains,
 Breaks the weak fence and crops the grassy plains.
 Along the mead where late the shuddering hind
 Brav'd the thick snow-storm his lost sheep to find,
 Fearful of every footstep, lest he pass
 The pool half-frozen, or the deep morass,
 The whistling ploughman drives his team along,
 Or the gay milk-maid chants her matin song.
 Swift through the splendor of an azure sky
 Pellucid clouds with feathery lightness fly,
 Half seem the glory of the sun to veil,
 And cast long shadows slanting o'er the dale,
 While the proud mountain, glorying in the light,
 Meets the full lustre with a hue more bright :
 For Nature, now exulting in his ray,
 Pays her full homage to the Lord of Day,
 Hangs her frail foliage round his radiant team,
 And drinks the fervor of his noontide beam.

Shall I resume my lyre, and yet again
 Salute the season with my wonted strain ?

Full oft with sighs I woo'd the Spring's return,
 But not to bring me wreaths for Lycid's urn :
 I vainly hop'd her pure and balmy dew
 Might swell the failing fount of life anew,
 While gentle zephyr cool'd the throbbing pains
 Of burning fever rushing through his veins,
 Restor'd the lacerated valves of breath,
 And wip'd the morbid, icy damps of death.
 For this I sued : but, the request denied,
 My failing hand refus'd the lyre to guide,
 And now it rests with cypress wreaths o'erhung,
 Mute as the friend at whose request I sung.
 For, ah ! what invocation could I choose,
 What spell, what voice, to bind the charmed Muse ?
 Attendant now on Lycid's early hearse,
 Imagination, Science, Taste and Verse,
 Consociate with bright Virtue's train, deplore
 A son of Genius fall'n to rise no more !
 As from Devon's health-restoring meads,
 Explor'd in vain, the sad procession speeds,
 To bear what neither prayers nor art could save
 To the safe shelter of a brother's grave :
 Within yon dome *, where oft his tongue confess'd
 His great Redeemer, shall his relics rest.

* Borne through the portals of her native church,
 Thence never to return.

Hurd.

The plunder'd casket of a mind divine
May claim admission to the holiest shrine.

See the sad parents, doom'd alike to bend
With years and grief, their only child attend !
That child, who ne'er a Mother's bosom griev'd
Till pale Consumption flatter'd and deceiv'd ;
Whose presence still a Father's soul entranc'd,
Till " Death's pale flag was o'er his face advanc'd."
E'en Envy weeping joins the funeral train,
Who long for such a son had ask'd in vain.

Now, by sad sympathy severely taught,
She owns the transient bliss was dearly bought,
Since the bereaved stewards must resign
The short possession of a trust divine ;
For but a line, a moment, forms the bound
That parts full transport from distress profound.
Terrestrial fame, though eminently bright,
Like meteors kindling in a stormy night,
Still the fond eye of eager hope betrays,
Till deeper gloom succeeds the dazzling blaze.

While these sad views depress the lyric strain,
Gay Spring demands the votive hymn in vain ;
Unseen the golden crocus blooms and fades,
Unnotic'd violets perfume the glades ;
Returning life, in vain, in hill and bower
Shoots in the tree and blossoms in the flower ;

Still o'er the grave Death unresisted reigns,
 And binds his victims in unyielding chains;
 Heaven's last best work, creation's earth-born king,
 Withers like grass, but knows no second spring.

O let me then, as friendship's claims require,
 Wake to this solemn theme my silent lyre,
 Pursue the Muse, perchance with farewell verse,
 And hang one garland on her fav'rite's hearse.
 His was each excellence whose varied beam
 Attracts affection, wonder and esteem;
 Filial observance, which, avoiding praise,
 Hides its meek charities from public gaze;
 Benevolence ingenuous and refin'd,
 The strong effusion of a manly mind,
 Which led him oft from pleasure's festive crowd
 To lift the head by heavy anguish bow'd,
 Or on the lonely hours of age to throw
 The cheerful lustre of a transient glow.
 His were strong powers of sense, combin'd with zeal
 For christian verity, and England's weal;
 Just scorn of pedantry, and bold disdain
 Of petty science, querulous and vain,
 Whose knowledge, bounded by an insect's range,
 Attempts the universe of God to change,
 While false philosophy's perverted beams
 Light the crude chaos of its empty dreams.

Ah Lycid ! while around thy urn I twine
 This artless wreath, and grave this heart-taught lin
 Weeping I supplicate the Muse, to send
 A bard and offering worthier of my friend :
 A kindred soul (if haply such there be)
 Would blazon Virtue while describing thee.

How glow'd thy generous spirit, bright and warm,
 When the fell Atheist show'd his hideous form ;
 Or the sly Sophist darted from his lair,
 To wind round thoughtless youth the mortal snare !
 Then when Religion call'd thee to defend
 Her holy outworks from some seeming friend,
 Or show'd thee where beneath her sacred shrine
 The Prince of darkness delv'd th' accursed mine ;
 Then, while thy arm with vigorous grasp upstay'd
 The banner of the God thy soul obey'd,
 Thy eloquence the sinner's rage control'd,
 Rais'd the weak-hearted, and inflam'd the cold.
 For thou wast early train'd in Wisdom's ways,
 And taught her " inexpressive song of praise."
 Where'er the hallow'd Muse of Sion stray'd,
 Through Carmel's woods, or Jordan's flowery glade,
 If her loud trumpet blew on Sinai's mount,
 Or dulcet timbrels play'd by Kishon's fount,—
 Attendant on her ecstasies, 'twas thine
 To catch the import of the strain divine:

Thrice blessed in thy lot! and early wise,
To learn on earth the songs of Paradise.

For what avails it now, though Genius shed
His lambent splendor on thy favour'd head,
Though Eloquence in silver tones express'd
Thy vivid thoughts in aptest language dress'd;
Though every Muse in Greece or Latium nurs'd
To thee the sweetest of their songs rehears'd;
Though Science suffer'd thee the clue to gain
Which trac'd each lab'rinth of her ample fane;
Though holy Themis to thy trust consign'd
The righteous code with which she bless'd mankind,
And urg'd thy zeal unwearied and unaw'd
To stem oppression, and develop fraud,
While the pure lustre of her starry crown
Taught thee through arduous paths to seek renown;
Though rural beauty to thy pencil gave
Her tinted foliage, and her limpid wave,
Pleas'd in thy landscapes her green vales to view,
Or distant mountains tipt with dusky blue;
Though thou couldst strike with matchless skill the lyre,
And teach our hearts to vibrate with the wire,
When fond affection call'd thee to bemoan
A friend, whose fortunes were too like thy own;
All all was bootless. In the dreary grave
No laurels bloom, no silver olives wave:

Nor Guido's hues nor Milton's rapturous strain
 Can numb the poignant throes of mortal pain :
 Science then veils her ineffectual beam,
 And human glory passes like a dream.

Yet at that hour, when Lycid's parting view
 Turn'd from a world whose worth he justly knew,
 When his pure soul's terrene and narrow cell,
 Disjoin'd by agony, in ruins fell,
 Did no strong pang the patriot's bosom rend?
 Had life no interest to the son or friend?
 Though the near view of glory must absorb
 All mean attachment to this darksome orb,
 Yet unregarded could Affection's voice
 Recount the ties of nature or of choice?
 Those sanction'd ties, which on the cross confess'd
 His great Redeemer dignified and bless'd!
 Could he, who e'er the social banquet grac'd
 With Attic eloquence, or classic taste,
 Who trod untainted Dissipation's bower,
 Beheld the Syren, and defied her power;
 Who forc'd loose Comus and his bestial train
 To dread the virtue they assail'd in vain;
 Who their drugg'd chalice from the lip of youth
 Dash'd with reproofing candour fraught with truth;
 Could he, whose temper'd feelings, firm yet warm,
 Show'd human-kindness in an angel's form,

'Resign a world which knew his worth so well,
 Nor blend compunction with his last farewell?
 "By antient learning warm'd," with patriot zeal
 How throb'd his bosom for his country's weal!
 Like noble Falkland, fall'n on evil times,
 When public virtue strove with monstrous crimes,
 He saw his native land environ'd round,
 Yet rising vig'rous from each hostile wound.
 He saw her sons in arms unrivall'd shine
 Beneath the pole-star and the burning line,
 While the vile drones of peace, the reptile swarms
 Bred in the putrid marsh which plenty forms,
 Still with mad rancour aim'd their poisonous stings
 Against their country's honour, and her King's;
 And words of insolence and deeds of shame
 Usurp'd the patriot's prostituted name.

Ah Friend revered! methinks again I trace
 Th'indignant glow that kindled in thy face,
 Still as thy prescient eye with anxious glance
 Too well foresaw the monstrous crimes of France,
 And fear'd thy Britain, in its vortex whirl'd,
 Would sink amid the ruin of the world.
 How joy'd thy righteous spirit, when she threw
 Her loud defiance to the impious crew,
 Call'd on her faithful offspring to repel
 The shafts of slander, and the blasts of hell,

And roll'd her awful thunder o'er the deep,
 To rouse the nations from their charmed sleep:
 For Antichrist, whose multifarious reign
 The rapt apostle sung in mystic strain,
 Still on the earth her cup of trembling flings,
 And shines exalted on the Dragon's wings.
 See for her chosen minister she calls
 The idol Tyrant of th' infuriate Gauls,
 Who in the madness of apostate zeal
 Spurn'd at the Christian cross with threat'ning heel;
 He, whom gaunt wolves, howling o'er heaps of slain,
 And screaming vultures hail'd on Jaffa's plain,
 Telling how murder their vast feast prepar'd,
 When friends and captives were no longer spar'd;
 He, who inglorious fled from Acre's strand,
 From Acre, rescu'd by one British band,
 And flying heard this warning voice upbraid,
 "Here, proud Destroyer, shall thy course be staid!"
 He, who deserted Afric's ravag'd shore
 To snatch a sceptre foul with gouts of gore,
 To quench in Europe each faint spark allied
 To manly fortitude and virtuous pride,
 Bidding the realms which cradled Freedom groan
 Beneath another Timur's galling throne.
 Yet while his emirs nauseous incense burn,
 Or chant the eulogy he bids them learn;

While felons in the priestly stole array'd
 Defile the crosier, and the cowl degrade;
 'Tis his from the mock worship to depart
 With soul uncleans'd, and unbelieving heart,
 Veiling by childish forms, or sullen gloom,
 The sure forebodings of his future doom;
 While desperation drives his wayward mood
 To baby threats, or savage thirst for blood;
 Till the astonish'd world recoils aghast
 At new misdeeds, and half forgets the past.

Yet still all-ruling Heav'n, whose just decree
 Spares not the guilty, Murderer! looks on thee.
 Its guarding wings th' imperial Eagle spread,
 But underneath their covert Nero bled.
 High on his throne besotted Claudius sate,
 While his crown'd trait'ress drugg'd the bowl of fate,
 And through the purple's vulnerable vest
 Plebeian daggers pierc'd Domitian's breast.
 Yet whether Vengeance bid its dread commands
 Post on the charge of Britain's armed bands;
 Or some indignant Frenchman, to efface
 The record of his country's long disgrace,
 Lift in the ranks of fight his righteous blade,
 And offer thee to murder'd D'Eughien's shade;
 Whether Conspiracy beneath thy feet
 Spread her strong toils, and sap thy last retreat;

Or pale Disease enchain thy heavy head
 And listless members to her iron bed;
 Horror for thee her fiercest pangs prepares,
 Convulsive tossings, and foreboding cares;
 Defeated Malice, and detected Art
 Shall clench their festering talons in thy heart,
 Till thy fell spirit is compell'd to fly
 To the great audit it would fain deny.
 For lawless power, Heaven's instrument of ill,
 In vain rebels against th' Eternal will,
 Or hopes its domination to increase,
 When the foul sins which claim'd correction cease.
 Soon as a humbled world returns to God,
 Relenting mercy breaks th' oppressor's rod.

Such are the vivid hopes which truth divine
 Imparts to faith; and, Lycid, these were thine.
 E'en on that couch, where, graceful in decay,
 Thy languid form a mournful ruin lay,
 Thy mind still vig'rous would full oft repel
 The heavy pressure of its mould'ring cell;
 Again would wing its 'custom'd flights, and trace
 The mighty works of nature and of grace,
 And see th' Almighty to his sov'reign plan
 Bend e'en the stubborn wrath of impious man.
 Then though the false Italian, mad with rage,
 Threw o'er the severing main his boastful gage,

And rang'd in length'ning camps his vassal bands,
 Thick as the locusts on Arabia's sands;...
 Trusting in Him, the God whom Britons fear,
 To stop invasion in its wild career,
 That God, whose power in great Eliza's reign
 Roll'd the vast ocean o'er the pride of Spain,
 A firm assurance all thy fears compos'd,
 And the last labours of the patriot clos'd
 With grateful thanks to Him who gave thee breath,
 That this lov'd island claim'd thy birth and death.

Ah! who can paint that death, but such as saw
 Th' instructive scene with triumph, grief and awe;
 Saw thee sustain the Christian soldier's part,
 Though nature's claims were throbbing in thy heart;
 Serenely trusting in the promis'd day,
 When "the last enemy" shall yield his prey,
 And give the germ of life, in weakness sown,
 A power to burst from the sepulchral stone;
 Stript of its mortal slough, expanding bright
 In the full splendor of celestial light,
 No more the victim of decay or pain,
 But fitted for Eternity's vast reign?

When at thy couch Death took his certain stand,
 Rais'd his strong mace and shook thy ebbing sand;
 When with a farewell glance thy misty eyes
 Saw the sun sink, no more on thee to rise;
 The faithful Muse, disdaining to retire,
 Gave to thy trembling grasp her sacred lyre.

A smile seraphic on thy features play'd,
 While every chord thy wonted skill obey'd,
 And hymn'd to distant friendship an adieu *,
 To genius, elegance, and pathos true.

* The author is permitted to gratify the public with the last effusion of this Gentleman's elegant muse. The following sonnet was intended for an introduction to several poems which he composed in Devonshire under the *conscious* pressure of a mortal sickness. The reader of taste and sensibility will appreciate its beauties, especially when it is considered that this extraordinary proof of unclouded intellect and serenity of mind was written but a few hours previous to his dissolution.

TO MRS. B. J——N.

J——n ! whose gentle voice hath prompted oft
 My song, else mute—accept this parting strain :
 For thou, whether my Muse in happier vein
 Fram'd the light madrigal, in numbers soft
 As shepherd's pipe heard from the hilly croft,
 Or spelt the glories of that fabling reign
 Invisible to all of mortal stain,
 With soothing praise thy voice was heard aloft.....
 Accept this parting strain : nor scorn the rymes
 It offers thee; altho' the Muse divine
 Smile not—for they were fram'd in troublous times :
 Accept this parting strain ! 'tis the last sign,
 The last memorial that can flow from me
 Of the fond friendship that I bear to thee.

Such are the strains symphonious angels breathe,
 When happy souls receive the golden wreath.
 'Tis done—life's task is clos'd—what now remains,
 Save the sharp struggle of the parting pains?
 These were not tedious, and a parent's breast
 Form'd the soft pillow of thy endless rest.
 "Let me the death of Faith and Virtue die,"
 Said Midian's wizard priest with boding sigh,
 As on the heights of Peor with rites profane
 He strove with Israel's mighty God in vain.
 "Give us to die the death of Lycid," say
 The proud, the impious, and the madly gay.
 Servants of sin! recall that weak request,
 Or live the life by such an exit blest.

When each fine organ, nerve and subtile juice
 Excites keen anguish, or suspends its use;
 When the cold limbs no more their aid impart,
 And the blood stagnates in the lab'ring heart;
 While o'er its seat untrac'd by mortal eye
 The soul still hovers, just prepar'd to fly;
 Can failing Nature brave this fearful strife,
 Uncheer'd by visions of a well-spent life?
 Can one poor wish, by former deeds belied,
 Become at once her passport and her guide,
 Erase each sin unwept and unforgiv'n,
 And robe her in the garment meet for heav'n?

For thee, my Friend, whose early scorn of vice
 Taught thee in youth to seek the "pearl of price,"
 Oft as bold fancy sad regret absorbs,
 I trace thy sojourn in yon starry orbs;
 I ask bright Hesper and night's silver queen,
 If thou inhabitest their worlds serene;
 Or, seated on cold Saturn's arch sublime,
 Hear'st thou the moving spheres in concert chime?
 Or dost thou through the vast ellipses rove,
 The moon-attended course of spacious Jove,
 Studious of Nature's wonders? Or, intent
 On glories that transcend the firmament,
 Climb'st thou those distant barriers* dimly bright,
 That flame, perchance, with uncreated light?
 Ah vain research! let Fancy fear to stray
 Save when Religion's lamp directs her way,
 And shows, emerging from its earthly clod,
 The faithful soul returning to its God;
 Whether to active joy, or happy rest,
 Its lot we know not,—but we know 'tis blest.

Call'd to this hope, shall Sorrow still complain,
 And balance her privation with thy gain?

* Some have surmised, that the nebulous stars were apertures which transmitted light from the highest heavens. The idea seems rather poetical than philosophical.

" Ah friend !" she cries, " 'twas thy capacious views
 " Which form'd my judgement and inspir'd my Muse.
 " Thy faithful counsels, with mild censure mixt,
 " Restrain'd wild Fancy, and Truth firmly fix'd.
 " How can I now the arduous conflict wage
 " With potent rivals, and a critic age?
 " How to the bar of public taste appeal,
 " Unschool'd, uncensur'd by thy active zeal?
 " No guiding arm will stay my failing feet,
 " No sheltering buckler cover my retreat.
 " The darts of Envy now will surely kill,—
 " They are not blunted by thy sapient skill.
 " Careless of vulgar praise, yet proud to claim
 " Thy honour'd plaudit, dearer far than fame,
 " Should that capricious power, relenting, deign
 " At length to rank me in her prosperous train,
 " No conscious feeling will the deed record
 " As the fair tribute of deserv'd reward,
 " Nor shall her clarion bid my soul rejoice,
 " Without the sweet responding of thy voice;
 " Her gaudy garlands will but bloom to fade,
 " Since thy firm laurel can no longer shade.
 " As the sweet Lesbian on her patron's shrine
 " Once hung each symbol of her art divine,
 " Here on thy tomb, as fear and duty urge,
 " I hang my harp, my garland, and my dirge.

" Mute be my lays as he who bade them flow,
 " Or but responsive to the notes of woe !"

While in these strains despairing Sorrow sighs,
 Thy parting counsels meet my weeping eyes,
 When, on the certain confines of the grave,
 Thy generous friendship, prompt to serve and save,
 Pass'd all my cares and hopes in long review,
 And blended wisdom with thy last adieu.
 And didst thou urge me by that solemn plea
 With me all-eloquent, respect for thee,
 Still to devote with singleness of aim
 Th'intrusted talents to the Donor's name,
 Unaw'd by flattery, unsubdu'd by fear,
 Humble yet firm, devout but not austere ;
 Still faithful in his warfare to abide,
 My hope His favour, and His word my guide ;
 Disclaiming party zeal and vain debate,
 Though sceptics scoff, and sectarists misstate ?
 Such were thy dictates ; and shall vain regret
 Make me the duty and the charge forget ?

Come, cypress-crowned lyre ! unstrung too long,
 Resume the mournful, yet the moral song ;
 'Tis Lycid calls : O break thy long repose,
 And pay the willing service friendship owes.
 What though my feeble strains will never more
 Ascend the heights he taught them to explore ;

Though, as remember'd precepts still recall
 The lov'd preceptor, tears of anguish fall,
 To damp the flame on which the Muse aspires,
 And quench the lustre of her kindling fires;
 Yet may my song, though void of studied grace,
 Charm the warm hearts of Britain's rising race,
 When with the virtues of an earlier age
 Fearless they rush on manhood's dangerous stage,
 Prompt to admire, to copy or to hate,
 Till some chance model stamps their future fate:
 To them would I disclose a Lycid's worth,
 And tell them Art and Nature grac'd his birth,
 With fairest flowers his envied path was strown,
 And Fame and Fortune were alike his own.
 Lov'd by the gay, and reverenc'd by the vain,
 Yet pure Religion rank'd him in her train.
 In life's last act he honour'd her behest,
 In death's last pang his Saviour's name he bless'd.
 Such once was Lycid! Generous youth, contend
 For equal honour, imitate my friend.

Think not this plant of Heav'n but meant to show
 The mild perfection of its sunny glow,
 To charm by symmetry the wondering eye,
 To droop in summer loveliness, and die,
 Ordain'd the reptile or the worm to feed ;...
 Know, this dry stem contains immortal seed ;

A healing fragrance still this dust retains,
 And memory treasures these rever'd remains :
 Unlike those flowers whose gaudy leaves produce
 No scent odorous, no balsamic juice,
 Which ne'er around the brows of Pæan twine,
 Nor form the wreaths of Science and the Nine,
 Nor in immortal fields renew their bloom;
 Their hope corruption, and contempt their doom.

For me, to whom the painful task belongs
 To strew the grave of all who lov'd my songs,
 To see the social feast profusely spread,
 Then find it like a fairy vision fled;
 Round me the partners of my youthful hours
 Fall as the scythe cuts down the summer flowers,
 While like a lonely relic I remain,
 And seek for some congenial growth in vain.
 Yet, if my evening life must pass away
 Rest of the joys which made my morning gay;
 If, mixing in the world, no more I find
 The soothing music of according mind,
 Nor in the manners of a race unknown
 Find tastes and habits fashion'd like my own;
 Dear are the scenes which memory still supplies,
 When truth and virtue form'd the sever'd ties;
 Dear are the tears by pure affection shed,
 And dear each duty to the pious dead.

Be these my future joys, nor these alone;
 Domestic harmony is still my own;
 Still does the firm supporting Elm incline
 His kind assistance to his married Vine.
 Nor do the Scions of affection shoot
 Deform'd or canker'd from the parent root.

Fair is their growth, their opening bloom is fair,
 And speaks a harvest for maternal care.
 If the gay tints of vivid hope are spent,
 Mine is the tranquil verdure of content.
 No harrowing spectre of remember'd crimes
 Blends with the visions of departed times.
 The mild regrets which vanish'd joys impart
 Refine the passions and correct the heart,
 And every dart by Death or Sorrow hurl'd
 Breaks some strong cord which bound us to the world,
 This dying world! where every joy must fade,
 As the dark cypress spreads its threat'ning shade;
 Our tomb, our prison, yet our destin'd road
 Through storms and perils to a safe abode;
 Where my lost friends, array'd in radiant sheen,
 Forget or pity this sublunar scene:
 Be this my boast, in holy hope they died,
 And be their blest example still my guide!
 Like them the christian warfare may I wield!
 My days so number, and my life so yield!

Then shall this cup, which to the taste appears
 A bitter potion from the fount of tears,
 Th' immortal seed with healthful juice supply,
 And swell the fruit which ripens in the sky.

END OF VOL. III.

Printed by R. Taylor and Co. 38, Shoe Lane.

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